

NOVELS AND TALES

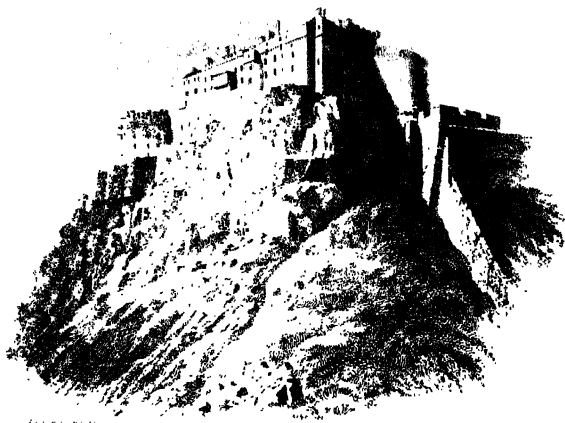
OF

THE AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY.

VOL. V.

ANTIQUARY.

ROB ROY.



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THE
ANTIQUARY.

VOL. V.

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CHAPTER I.

Who is he?—One that for the lack of land
Shall fight upon the water—he hath challenged
Formerly the grand whale ; and by his titles
Of Leviathan, Behemoth, and so forth.
He tilted with a sword-fish—Marry, sir,
Th' aquatic had the best—the argument
Still galls our champion's breech.

Old Play.

“AND the poor young fellow, Steenie Mucklebackit, is to be buried this morning,” said our old friend the Antiquary, as he exchanged his quilted night-gown for an old-fashioned black coat in lieu of that snuff-coloured vestment which he ordinarily wore, “and, I presume, it is expected that I should attend the funeral?”

“Ou aye,” answered the faithful Caxon, officiously brushing the white threads and specks from his patron's habit ; “the body, God help us, was

sae broken against the rocks that they're fain to hurry the burial. The sea's a kittle cast, as I tell my daughter, puir thing, when I want her to get up her spirits—the sea, says I, Jenny, is as uncertain a calling”——

“ As the calling of an old periwig-maker, that's robbed of his business by crops and the powder-tax. Caxon, thy topics of consolation are as ill chosen as they are foreign to the present purpose. *Quid mihi cum femina?* What have I to do with thy womankind, who have enough and to spare of mine own?—I pray of you again, am I expected by these poor people to attend the funeral of their son?”

“ O, doubtless, your honour is expected,” answered Caxon; “ weel I wot ye are expected. Ye ken in this country ilka gentleman is wussed to be sae civil as to see the corpse aff his grounds—Ye needna gang higher than the loan-head—it's no expected your honour suld leave the land—it's just a Kelso convoy, a step and a half ower the doorstane.”

“ A Kelso convoy !” echoed the inquisitive Antiquary; “ and why a Kelso convoy more than any other?”

“ Dear sir,” answered Caxon, “ how should I ken? it's just a bye-word.”

“ Caxon,” answered Oldbuck, “ thou art a mere periwig-maker—Had I asked Ochiltree the ques-

tion, he would have had a legend ready made to my hand."

"My business," replied Caxon, with more animation than he commonly displayed, "is with the outside of your honour's head, as ye are accustomed to say."

"True, Caxon, true; and it is no reproach to a thatcher that he is not an upholsterer."

He then took out his memorandum-book and wrote down, "Kelso convoy—said to be a step and a half ower the threshold. Authority—Caxon. *Quære*—Whence derived? *Mem.* To write to Dr Graysteel upon the subject."

Having made this entry, he resumed—"And truly, as to this custom of the landlord attending the body of the peasant, I approve it, Caxon. It comes from ancient times, and was founded deep in the notions of mutual aid and dependence between the lord and cultivator of the soil. And herein I must say, the feudal system (as also in its courtesy towards womankind in which it exceeded)—herein, I say, the feudal usages mitigated and softened the sternness of classical times. No man, Caxon, ever heard of a Spartan attending the funeral of a Helot—yet I dare be sworn that John of the Girnell—ye have heard of him, Caxon?"

"Aye, aye, sir," answered Caxon; "naebody can hae been lang in your honour's company without hearing of that gentleman."

“ Well,” continued the Antiquary, “ I would bet a trifle there was not a *kolb kerl*, or bondsman, or peasant, *ascriptus glebæ*, died upon the monks’ territories down here, but John of the Girnèll saw them fairly and decently interred.”

“ Aye, but if it like your honour, they say he had mair to do wi’ the births than the burials. Ha ! ha ! ha !” with a gleeful chuckle.

“ Good, Caxon ! very good ! why, you shine this morning.”

“ And besides,” added Caxon, silyly, encouraged by his patron’s approbation, “ they say too that the Catholic priests in thae times gat something for ganging about to burials.”

“ Right, Caxon, right as my glove—by the bye, I fancy that phrase comes from the custom of pledging a glove as the signal of irrefragable faith—right, I say, as my glove, Caxon—but we of the Protestant ascendancy have the more merit in doing that duty for nothing which cost money in the reign of that empress of superstition, whom Spenser, Caxon, terms, in his allegorical phrase,

—— The daughter of that woman blind,
Abessa, daughter of Corecca slow——

But why talk I of these things to thee ?—my poor Lovel has spoiled me, and taught me to speak aloud when it is much the same as speaking to myself—where’s my nephew, Hector M’Intyre ?”

“ He’s in the parlour, sir, wi’ the leddies.”

“ Very well,” said the Antiquary, “ I will be-take me thither.”

“ Now, Monkbarns,” said his sister, on his entering the parlour, “ ye manna be angry.”

“ My dear uncle !” began Miss M’Intyre.

“ What’s the meaning of all this ?” said Oldbuck, in alarm of some impending bad news, and arguing upon the supplicating tone of the ladies, as a fortress apprehends an attack from the very first flourish of the trumpet which announces the summons ;—“ What’s all this ? What do you bespeak my patience for ?”

“ No particular matter I should hope, sir,” said Hector, who, with his arm in a sling, was seated at the breakfast-table ; however, whatever it may amount to I am answerable for it, as I am for much more trouble that I have occasioned, and for which I have little more than thanks to offer.”

“ No, no ! heartily welcome, heartily welcome—only let it be a warning to you,” said the Antiquary, “ against your fits of anger, which is a short madness—*Ira furor brevis*—but what is this new disaster ?”

“ My dog, sir, has unfortunately thrown down”—

“ If it please Heaven, not the lachrymatory from Clochnaben !” interjected Oldbuck.

“ Indeed, uncle,” said the young lady, “ I am afraid—it was that which stood upon the sideboard

—the poor thing only meant to eat the pat of fresh butter.”

“ In which she has fully succeeded, I presume, for I see that on the table is salted. But that is nothing—my lachrymatory, the main pillar of my theory, on which I rested to shew, in despite of the ignorant obstinacy of Mac-Cribb, that the Romans had passed the defiles of these mountains, and left behind them traces of their arts and arms, is gone—annihilated—reduced to such fragments as might be the shreds of a broken—flowerpot !

———— Hector, I love thee,
But never more be officer of mine.”

“ Why, really, sir, I am afraid I should make a bad figure in a regiment of your raising.”

“ At least, Hector, I would have you dispatch your camp train, and travel *expeditus*, or *relictis impedimentis*. You cannot conceive how I am annoyed by this beast—She commits burglary I believe, for I heard her charged with breaking into the kitchen after all the doors were locked, and eating up a shoulder of mutton.”—(Our readers, if they chance to remember Jenny Rintherout’s precaution of leaving the door open when she went down to the fisher’s cottage, will probably acquit poor Juno of that aggravation of guilt which the lawyers call a *claustrum fregit*, and which makes

the distance between burglary and privately stealing.)

“I am truly sorry, sir,” said Hector, “that Juno has committed so much disorder; but Jack Muirhead, the breaker, was never able to bring her under command. She has more travel than any bitch I ever knew, but”——

“Then, Hector, I wish the bitch would travel herself out of my grounds.”

“We will both of us retreat to-morrow or to-day, but I would not willingly part from my mother’s brother in unkindness about a paltry pipkin.”

“O brother, brother!” ejaculated Miss McIntyre, in utter despair at this vituperative epithet.

“Why, what would you have me call it?” continued Hector; “it was just such a thing as they use in Egypt to cool wine, or sherbet, or water—I brought home a pair of them—I might have brought home twenty.”

“What!” said Oldbuck, “shaped such as that your dog threw down?”

“Yes, sir, much such a sort of earthen jar as that which was on the sideboard. They are in my lodgings at Fairport; we brought a parcel of them to cool our wine on the passage—they answer wonderfully well—if I could think they would in any degree repay your loss, or rather that they could afford you pleasure, I am sure I should be much honoured by your accepting them.”

“ Indeed, my dear boy, I should be highly gratified by possessing them. To trace the connection of nations by their usages, and the similarity of the implements which they employ, has been long my favourite study. Every thing that can illustrate such connections is most valuable to me.”

“ Well, sir, I shall be much gratified by your acceptance of them, and a few trifles of the same kind.—And now, am I to hope you have forgiven me?”

“ O, my dear boy, you are only thoughtless and foolish.”

“ But Juno—she is only thoughtless too, I assure you—the breaker tells me she has no vice or stubbornness.”

“ Well, I grant Juno also a free pardon—conditioned, that you will imitate her in avoiding vice and stubbornness, and that henceforward she banish herself forth of Monkbarns parlour.”

“ Then, uncle,” said the soldier, “ I should have been very sorry and ashamed to propose to you any thing in the way of expiation of my own sins, or those of my follower, that I thought *worth* your acceptance; but now, as all is forgiven, will you permit the orphan-nephew, to whom you have been a father, to offer you a trifle, which I have been assured is really curious, and which only the cross accident of my wound has prevented my delivering to you before. I got it from a French Savant, to whom

I rendered some service after the Alexandria affair."

The captain put a small ring-case into the Antiquary's hands, which, when opened, was found to contain an antique ring of massive gold, with a cameo, most beautifully executed, bearing a head of Cleopatra. The Antiquary broke forth into unrepressed ecstacy, shook his nephew cordially by the hand, thanked him an hundred times, and shewed the ring to his sister and niece, the latter of whom had the tact to give it sufficient admiration; but Miss Griselda (though she had the same affection for her nephew) had not address enough to follow the lead.

"It's a bonny thing," she said, "Monkbarns, and, I dare say, a valuable—but it's out o' my way—ye ken I am nae judge o' sic matters."

"There spoke all Fairport in one voice!" exclaimed Oldbuck; "it is the very spirit of the borough has infected us all; I think I have smelled the smoke these two days, that the wind has stuck, like a *remora*, in the north-east—and its prejudices fly farther than its vapours. Believe me, my dear Hector, were I to walk up the High-street of Fairport, displaying this inestimable gem in the eyes of each one I met, no human creature, from the provost to the town-crier, would stop to ask me its history. But if I carried a bale of linen cloth under my arm, I could not penetrate to the Horse-

market ere I should be overwhelmed with queries about its precise texture and price. O, one might parody their brutal ignorance in the words of Gray :

‘ Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of wit and sense,
Dull garment of defensive proof
‘Gainst all that doth not gather pence.’ ”

The most remarkable proof of this peace-offering being quite acceptable, was, that while the Anti-quary was in full declamation, Juno, who held him in awe, according to the remarkable instinct by which dogs instantly discover those who like or dislike them, had peeped several times into the room, and encountering nothing very forbidding in his aspect, had at length presumed to introduce her full person, and finally, becoming bold by impunity, she actually ate up Mr Oldbuck’s toast, as, looking first at one, then at another of his audience, he repeated with self-complacency,

“ Weave the warp and weave the woof,”——

“ You remember the passage in the Fatal Sisters, which, by the way, is not so fine as in the original——But, hey-day ! my toast has vanished !—I see which way—Ah, thou type of womankind, no wonder they take offence at thy generic appellation !”—(So saying, he shook his fist at Juno, who

scoured out of the parlour.)—"However, as Jupiter, according to Homer, could not rule Juno in heaven, and as Jack Muirhead, according to Hector M^cIntyre, has been equally unsuccessful on earth, I suppose she must have her own way." And this mild censure the brother and sister justly accounted a full pardon for Juno's offences, and sate down well pleased to the morning meal.

When breakfast was over, the Antiquary proposed to his nephew to go down with him to attend the funeral. The soldier pleaded the want of a mourning habit.

"O that does not signify—your presence is all that is requisite. I assure you, you will see something that will entertain—no, that's an improper phrase—but that will interest you, from the resemblances which I will point out betwixt popular customs on such occasions and those of the ancients."

"Heaven forgive me!" thought M^cIntyre; "I shall certainly misbehave, and lose all the credit I have so lately and accidentally gained."

When they set out, schooled as he was by the warning and entreating looks of his sister, the soldier made his resolution strong to give no offence by evincing inattention or impatience. But our best resolutions are frail, when opposed to our predominant inclinations. Our Antiquary, to leave nothing unexplained, had commenced with the fu-

neral rites of the ancient Scandinavians, when his nephew interrupted him in a discussion upon the "age of hills," to remark, that a large sea-gull, which flitted around them, had come twice within shot. This error being acknowledged and pardoned, Oldbuck resumed his disquisition.

"These are circumstances you ought to attend to and be familiar with, my dear Hector; for, in the strange contingencies of the present war which agitates every corner of Europe, there is no knowing where you may be called upon to serve. If in Norway, for example, or Denmark, or any part of the ancient Scania, or Scandinavia, as we term it, what could be more convenient than to have at your fingers' ends the history and antiquities of that ancient country, the *officina gentium*, the mother of modern Europe, the nursery of those heroes,

Stern to resolve, and stubborn to endure,
Who smiled in death?—

How animating, for example, at the conclusion of a weary march, to find yourself in the vicinity of a Runic monument, and discover that you had pitched your tent beside the tomb of a hero!"

"I am afraid, sir, our mess would be better supplied if it chanced to be in the neighbourhood of a good poultry yard."

"Alas, that you will say so!—No wonder the

days of Cressy and Agincourt are no more, when respect for ancient valour has died away in the breasts of the British soldiery."

"By no means, sir—by no manner of means. I dare say that Edward and Henry, and the rest of these heroes, thought of their dinner, however, before they thought of examining an old tombstone. But I assure you, we are by no means insensible to the memory of our fathers' fame; I used often of an evening to get old Rory M'Alpin to sing us songs out of Ossian about the battles of Fingal and Lamon Mor, and Magnus and the spirit of Muir-artach."

"And did you believe," asked the aroused Antiquary, "did you absolutely believe that stuff of Macpherson's to be really ancient, you simple boy?"

"Believe it, sir?—how could I but believe it, when I have heard the songs sung from my infancy?"

"But not the same as Macpherson's English Ossian—you're not absurd enough to say that, I hope?" said the Antiquary, his brow darkening with wrath.

But Hector stoutly abode the storm; like many a sturdy Celt, he imagined the honour of his country and native language connected with the authenticity of these popular poems, and would have fought knee-deep, or forfeited life and land, rather than have given up a line of them. He therefore

undauntedly maintained that Rory M'Alpin could repeat the whole book from one end to another; and it was only upon cross-examination that he explained an assertion so general, by adding;—"At least, if he was allowed whiskey enough, he could repeat as long as any body would hearken to him."

"Ay, ay," said the Antiquary; "and that, I suppose, was not very long."

"Why, we had our duty, sir, to attend to, and could not sit listening all night to a piper."

"But do you recollect now," said Oldbuck, setting his teeth firmly together, and speaking without opening them, which was his custom when contradicted—"Do you recollect, now, any of these verses you thought so beautiful and interesting—being a capital judge, no doubt, of such things?"

"I don't pretend to much skill, uncle; but it's not very reasonable to be angry with me for admiring the antiquities of my own country more than those of the Harolds, Harfagers, and Hacos you are so fond of."

"Why, these, sir,—these mighty and unconquered Goths,—were your ancestors! The bare-breeched Celts whom they subdued, and suffered only to exist, like a fearful people, in the crevices of the rocks, were but their Mancipia and Serfs!"

Hector's brow now grew red in his turn. "Sir, I don't understand the meaning of Mancipia and Serfs, but I conceive such names are very improperly applied to Scotch Highlanders. No man but

my mother's brother dared to have used such language in my presence ; and I pray you will observe, that I consider it as neither hospitable, handsome, kind, nor generous usage towards your guest and your kinsman. My ancestors, Mr Oldbuck"—

" Were great and gallant chiefs, I dare say, Hector ; and I did not really mean to give you such immense offence in treating a point of remote antiquity, a subject on which I always am myself cool, deliberate, and unimpassioned. But you are hot and hasty, as if you were Hector and Achilles, and Agamemnon to boot."

" I am sorry I expressed myself so hastily, uncle, especially to you, who have been so generous and good—But my ancestors"—

" No more about it, lad ; I meant them no affront—none."

" I am glad of it, sir ; for the house of M'Intyre"—

" Peace be with them all, every man of them," said the Antiquary. " But to return to our subject—Do you recollect, I say, any of those poems which afforded you such amusement ?"

" Very hard this," thought M'Intyre, " that he will speak with such glee of every thing which is ancient, excepting my family."—Then, after some efforts at recollection, he added aloud, " Yes, sir,—I think I do remember some lines ; but you do not understand the Gaelic."

“ And will readily excuse hearing it. But you can give me some idea of the sense in our own vernacular idiom ?”

“ I shall prove a wretched interpreter,” said M‘Intyre, running over the original, well garnished with *aghes*, *aughes*, and *oughs*, and similar gutturals, and then coughing and hawking as if the translation stuck in his throat. At length, having premised that the poem was a dialogue between the poet Oisín, or Ossian, and Patrick, the tutelar Saint of Ireland, and that it was difficult, if not impossible, to render the exquisite felicity of the first two or three lines, he said the sense was to this purpose :

“ Patrick the psalm-singer,
Since you will not listen to one of my stories,
Though you never heard it before,
I am sorry to tell you
You are little better than an ass.”——

“ Good ' good !” exclaimed the Antiquary; “ but go on. Why, this is, after all, the most admirable fooling—I dare say the poet was very right. What says the Saint ?”

“ He replies in character,” said M‘Intyre; “ but you should hear M‘Alpin sing the original. The speeches of Ossian come in upon a strong deep bass—those of Patrick are upon a tenor key.”

“ Like M‘Alpin’s drone and small pipes, I suppose,” said Oldbuck. “ Pray, go on.”

“ Well then, Patrick replies to Ossian :

“ Upon my word, son of Fingal,
While I am warbling the psalms,
The clamour of your old women’s tales
Disturbs my devotional exercises.”

“ Excellent !—why, this is better and better. I hope Saint Patrick sung better than Blattergowl’s precentor, or it would be hang-choice between the poet and psalmist. But what I admire is the courtesy of these two eminent persons towards each other. It is a pity there should not be a word of this in Macpherson’s translation.”

“ If you are sure of that,” said M’Intyre, gravely, “ he must have taken very unwarrantable liberties with his original.”

“ It will go near to be thought so shortly—but pray proceed.”

“ Then,” said M’Intyre, “ this is the answer of Ossian :

“ Dare you compare your psalms,
You son of a”——

“ Son of a what !” exclaimed Oldbuck.

“ It means, I think,” said the young soldier, with some reluctance, “ son of a female dog :

“ Do you compare your psalms
To the tales of the bare-arm’d Fenians ?”

“ Are you sure you are translating that last epithet correctly, Hector ?”

“ Quite sure, sir,” answered Hector, doggedly.

“ Because I should have thought the nudity might have been quoted as existing in a different part of the body.”

Disdaining to reply to this insinuation, Hector proceeded in his recitation :

“ I shall think it no great harm
To wring your bald head from your shoulders”——

“ But what is that yonder ?” said Hector, interrupting himself.

“ One of the herd of Proteus,” said the Antiquary——“ a *Phoca*, or seal, lying asleep on the beach.”

Upon which M^r Intyre, with the eagerness of a young sportsman, totally forgot both Ossian, Patrick, his uncle, and his wound, and, exclaiming “ I shall have him ! I shall have him !” snatched the walking-stick out of the hand of the astonished Antiquary, at some risk of throwing him down, and set off at full speed to get between the animal and the sea, to which element, having caught the alarm, she was rapidly retreating.

Not Sancho, when his master interrupted his account of the combatants of Pentapolin with the naked arm, to advance in person to the charge of

the flock of sheep, stood more confounded than Oldbuck at this sudden escapade of his nephew.

“Is the devil in him,” was his first exclamation, “to go to disturb the brute that was never thinking of him!”—Then elevating his voice, “Hector—nephew—fool—let alone the *Phoca*—let alone the *Phoca*—they bite, I tell you, like furies.—He minds me no more than a post—there—there they are at it—Gad, the *Phoca* has the best of it! I am glad to see it,” said he, in the bitterness of his heart, though really alarmed for his nephew’s safety; “I am glad to see it, with all my heart and spirit.”

In truth, the seal, finding her retreat intercepted by the light-footed soldier, confronted him manfully, and having sustained a heavy blow without injury, she knitted her brows, as is the fashion of the animal when incensed, and making use at once of her fore paws and her unwieldy strength, wrenched the weapon out of the assailant’s hand, overturned him on the sands, and scuttled away into the sea without doing him any farther injury. Captain M’Intyre, a good deal out of countenance at the issue of his exploit, just rose in time to receive the ironical congratulations of his uncle, upon a single combat, worthy to be commemorated by Ossian himself, “since,” said the Antiquary, “your magnanimous opponent hath fled, though not upon eagle’s wings, from the foe that was low——Egad, she wallopped away with all the grace of triumph,

and has carried my stick off also, by way of *spolia opima*."

M'Intyre had little to answer for himself, except that a Highlander could never pass a deer, a seal, or a salmon, where there was a possibility of having a trial of skill with them, and that he had forgot one of his arms was in a sling. He also made his fall an apology for returning back to Monkbarns, and thus escaped the farther raillery of his uncle, as well as his lamentations for his walking-stick.

"I cut it," he said, "in the classic woods of Hawthornden, when I did not expect always to have been a bachelor—I would not have given it for an ocean of seals—O Hector, Hector!—thy namesake was born to be the prop of Troy, and thou to be the plague of Monkbarns!"

CHAPTER II.

Tell me not of it, friend—when the young weep,
Their tears are luke-warm brine ;—from our old eyes
Sorrow falls down like hail-drops of the North,
Chilling the furrows of our wither'd cheeks,
Cold as our hopes, and harden'd as our feeling—
Theirs, as they fall, sink sightless—ours recoil,
Heap the fair plain, and bleaken all before us.

Old Play.

THE Antiquary, being now alone, hastened his pace, which had been retarded by these various discussions, and the rencontre which had closed them, and soon arrived before the half-dozen cottages at Mussel-crag. They now had, in addition to their usual squalid and uncomfortable appearance, the melancholy attributes of the house of mourning. The boats were all drawn up on the beach ; and, though the day was fine, and the season favourable, the chaunt, which is used by the fishers when at sea, was silent, as well as the prattle of the children, and the shrill song of the mother, as she sits mending her nets by the door. A few of the neighbours, some in their antique and well-saved suits of black, others in their ordinary clothes, but

all bearing an expression of mournful sympathy with distress so sudden and unexpected, stood gathered around the door of Mucklebackit's cottage, waiting till "the body was lifted." As the Laird of Monkbarns approached, they made way for him to enter, doffing their hats and bonnets as he passed, with an air of melancholy courtesy, and he returned their salutes in the same manner.

In the inside of the cottage was a scene, which our Wilkie alone could have painted, with that exquisite feeling of nature that characterizes his enchanting productions.

The body was laid in its coffin within the wooden bedstead which the young fisher had occupied while alive. At a little distance stood the father, whose rugged weather-beaten countenance, shaded by his grizzled hair, had faced many a stormy night and night-like day. He was apparently revolving his loss in his mind with that strong feeling of painful grief, peculiar to harsh and rough characters, which almost breaks forth into hatred against the world, and all that remain in it, after the beloved object is withdrawn. The old man had made the most desperate efforts to save his son, and had only been withheld by main force from renewing them at a moment, when, without the possibility of assisting the sufferer, he must himself have perished. All this apparently was boiling in his recollection. His glance was directed sidelong towards

the coffin, as to an object on which he could not stedfastly look, and yet from which he could not withdraw his eyes. His answers to the necessary questions which were occasionally put to him, were brief, harsh, and almost fierce. His family had not yet dared to address to him a word, either of sympathy or consolation. His masculine wife, virago as she was, and absolute mistress of the family, as she justly boasted herself, on all ordinary occasions, was, by this great loss, terrified into silence and submission, and compelled to hide from her husband's observation the bursts of her female sorrow. As he had rejected food ever since the disaster had happened, not daring herself to approach him, she had that morning, with affectionate artifice, employed the youngest and favourite child to present her husband with some nourishment. His first action was to push it from him with an angry violence, that frightened the child; his next, to snatch up the boy and devour him with kisses. "Ye'll be a bra' fallow an ye be spared, Patie,—but ye'll never—never can be—what he was to me!—He has sailed the coble wi' me since he was ten years auld, and there wasna the like o' him drew a net betwixt this and Buchan-ness—They say folks maun submit—I shall try."

And he had been silent from that moment until compelled to answer the necessary questions we

have already noticed. Such was the disconsolate state of the father.

In another corner of the cottage, her face covered by her apron, which was flung over it, sat the mother, the nature of her grief sufficiently indicated, by the wringing of her hands, and the convulsive agitation of the bosom which the covering could not conceal. Two of her gossips, officiously whispering into her ear the common-place topic of resignation under irremediable misfortune, seemed as if they were endeavouring to stun the grief which they could not console.

The sorrow of the children was mingled with wonder at the preparations they beheld around them, and at the unusual display of wheaten bread and wine, which the poorest peasant, or fisher, offers to the guests on these mournful occasions; and thus their grief for their brother's death was almost already lost in admiration of the splendour of his funeral.

But the figure of the old grandmother was the most remarkable of the sorrowing group. Seated on her accustomed chair, with her usual air of apathy, and want of interest in what surrounded her, she seemed every now and then mechanically to resume the motion of twirling her spindle—then to look towards her bosom for the distaff, although both had been laid aside—She would then cast her

eyes about as if surprised at missing the usual implements of her industry, and appear caught by the black colour of the gown in which they had dressed her, and embarrassed by the number of persons by whom she was surrounded—then, finally, she would raise her head with a ghastly look, and fix her eyes upon the bed which contained the coffin of her grandson, as if she had at once, and for the first time, acquired sense to comprehend her inexpressible calamity. These alternate feelings of embarrassment, wonder, and grief, seemed to succeed each other more than once upon her torpid features. But she spoke not a word, neither had she shed a tear; nor did one of the family understand, either from look or expression, to what extent she comprehended the uncommon bustle around her. So she sat among the funeral assembly like a connecting link between the surviving mourners and the dead corpse which they bewailed—a being in whom the light of existence was already obscured by the encroaching shadows of death.

When Oldbuck entered this house of mourning, he was received by a general and silent inclination of the head, and, according to the fashion of Scotland on such occasions, wine and spirits and bread were offered round to the guests. Elspeth, as these refreshments were presented, surprised and startled the whole company by motioning to the person who bore them to stop; then, taking a glass in her hand,

she rose up, and, as the smile of dotage played upon her shrivelled features, she pronounced with a hollow and tremulous voice, "Wishing a' your healths, sirs, and often may we hae such merry meétings."

All shrunk from the ominous pledge, and set down the untasted liquor with a degree of shuddering horror, which will not surprise those who know how many superstitions are still common on such occasions among the Scottish vulgar. But, as the old woman tasted the liquor, she suddenly exclaimed with a sort of shriek, "What's this?—this is wine—how should there be wine in my son's house?—Aye," she continued, with a suppressed groan, "I mind the sorrowful cause now," and, dropping the glass from her hand, she stood a moment gazing fixedly on the bed in which the coffin of her grandson was deposited, and then sinking gradually into her seat, she covered her eyes and forehead with her withered and pallid hand.

At this moment the clergyman entered the cottage. Mr Blattergowl, though a dreadful proser, particularly on the subject of augmentations, localities, tiends, and overtures in that session of the General Assembly, to which, unfortunately for his auditors, he chanced to act as moderator, was nevertheless a good man, in the old Scottish presbyterian phrase, God-ward and man-ward. No divine was more attentive in visiting the sick and afflicted, in catechizing the youth, in instructing the ig-

nerant, and in reproving the erring. And hence, notwithstanding impatience of his prolixity and prejudices, personal or professional, and notwithstanding, moreover, a certain habitual contempt for his understanding, especially on affairs of genius and taste, on which Blattergowl was apt to be diffuse, from his hope of one day fighting his way to a chair of rhetoric or belles lettres,—notwithstanding, I say, all the prejudices excited against him by these circumstances, our friend the Antiquary looked with great regard and respect on the said Blattergowl, though I own he could seldom, even by his sense of decency and the remonstrances of his woman-kind, be *hounded out*, as he called it, to hear him preach. But he regularly took shame to himself for his absence when Blattergowl came to Monkbarns to dinner, to which he was always invited of a Sunday, a mode of testifying his respect which the proprietor probably thought fully as agreeable to the clergyman, and rather more congenial to his own habits.

To return from a digression which can only serve to introduce the honest clergyman more particularly to our readers, Mr Blattergowl had no sooner entered the hall, and received the mute and melancholy salutations of the company whom it contained, than he edged himself towards the unfortunate father, and seemed to endeavour to slide in a few words of condolence or of consolation. But the

old man was incapable as yet of receiving either ; he nodded, however, gruffly, and shook the clergyman's hand in acknowledgment of his good intentions, but was either unable or unwilling to make any verbal reply.

The minister next passed to the mother, moving along the floor as slowly, silently, and gradually, as if he had been afraid that the ground would, like unsafe ice, break beneath his feet, or that the first echo of a footstep was to dissolve some magic spell, and plunge the hut, with all its inmates, into a subterranean abyss. The tenor of what he had said to the poor woman could only be judged by her answers, as, half-stifled by sobs ill-repressed, and by the covering which she still kept over her countenance, she faintly answered at each pause in his speech—" Yes, sir, yes !—Ye're very gude—ye're very gude !—Nae doubt, nae doubt !—It's our duty to submit !—But, O dear, my poor Steenie, the pride o' my very heart, that was sac handsome and comely, and a help to his family, and a comfort to us a', and a pleasure to a' that lookit on him !—O my bairn, my bairn, my bairn ! what for is thou lying there, and eh ! what for am I left to greet for ye !"

There was no contending with this burst of sorrow and natural affection. Oldbuck had repeated recourse to his snuff-box to conceal the tears which, despite his shrewd and caustic temper, were apt to

start on such occasions. The female assistants whimpered, the men held their bonnets to their faces, and spoke apart with each other. The clergyman, meantime, addressed his ghostly consolation to the aged grandmother. At first she listened, or seemed to listen, to what he said, with the apathy of her usual unconsciousness. But as, in pressing this theme, he approached so near to her ear, that the sense of his words became distinctly intelligible to her, though unheard by those who stood more distant, her countenance at once assumed that stern and expressive cast which characterized her intervals of intelligence. She drew up her head and body, shook her head in a manner that showed at least impatience, if not scorn of his counsel, and waved her hand slightly, but with a gesture so expressive, as to indicate to all who witnessed it a marked and disdainful rejection of the ghostly consolation proffered to her. The minister stepped back as if repulsed, and, by lifting gently and dropping his hand, seemed to show at once wonder, sorrow, and compassion for her dreadful state of mind. The rest of the company sympathized, and a stifled whisper went through them, indicating how much her desperate and determined manner impressed them with awe and even horror.

In the mean time the funeral company was completed, by the arrival of one or two persons who had been expected from Fairport. The wine and

spirits again circulated, and the dumb show of greeting was anew interchanged. The grandame a second time took a glass in her hand, drank its contents, and exclaimed, with a sort of laugh,—“Ha! ha! I hac tasted wine twice in ae day—Whan did I that before, think ye, cummers?—Never since”——

And the transient glow vanishing from her countenance, she set the glass down, and sunk upon the settle from whence she had risen to snatch at it.

As the general amazement subsided, Mr Oldbuck, whose heart bled to witness what he considered as the errings of the enfeebled intellect struggling with the torpid chill of age and of sorrow, observed to the clergyman that it was time to proceed to the ceremony. The father was incapable of giving directions, but the nearest relation of the family made a sign to the carpenter, who in such cases goes through the duty of the undertaker, to proceed in his office. The creak of the screw-nails presently announced that the lid of the last mansion of mortality was in the act of being secured above its tenant. The last act which separates us for ever, even from the mortal reliques of the person we assemble to mourn, has usually its effect upon the most indifferent, selfish, and hard-hearted. With a spirit of contradiction, which we may be pardoned for esteeming narrow-minded, the fathers of the Scottish kirk rejected, even on this most so-

lemn occasion, the form of an address to the Divinity, lest they should be thought to give countenance to the rituals of Rome or of England. With much better and more liberal judgment, it is the present practice of most of the Scottish clergymen to seize this opportunity of offering a prayer, and exhortation, suitable to make an impression upon the living, while they are yet in the very presence of the reliques of him, whom they have but lately seen such as they themselves, and who now is such as they must in their time become. But this decent and praiseworthy practice was not adopted at the time of which I am treating, or, at least, Mr Blattergowl did not act upon it, and the ceremony proceeded without any devotional exercise.

The coffin, covered with a pall, and supported upon handspikes by the nearest relatives, now only waited the father to support the head, as is customary. Two or three of these privileged persons spoke to him, but he only answered by shaking his hand and his head in token of refusal. With better intention than judgment, the friends, who considered this as an act of duty on the part of the living, and of decency towards the deceased, would have proceeded to enforce their request, had not Oldbuck interfered between the distressed father and his well-meaning tormentors, and informed them, that he himself, as landlord and master to the deceased,

“ would carry his head to the grave.” In spite of the sorrowful occasion, the hearts of the relatives swelled within them at so marked a distinction on the part of the Laird ; and old Ailison Breck, who was present among other fish-women, swore almost aloud, “ His honour Monkbarns should never want sax warp of oysters in the season, (of which fish he was understood to be fond,) if she should gang to sea and dredge for them hersel, in the foulest wind that ever blew.” And such is the temper of the Scottish common people, that, by this instance of compliance with their customs, and respect for their persons, Mr Oldbuck gained more popularity than by all the sums which he had yearly distributed in the parish for purposes of private or general charity.

The sad procession now moved slowly forward, preceded by the beadles, or saulies, with their batons,—miserable-looking old men, tottering as if on the edge of that grave to which they were marshalling another, and clad, according to Scottish guise, with threadbare black coats, and hunting-caps, decorated with rusty crape. Monkbarns would probably have remonstrated against this superfluous expence, had he been consulted ; but, in doing so, he would have given more offence than he gained popularity by condescending to perform the office of chief mourner. Of this he was quite aware, and

wisely withheld rebuke, where rebuke and advice would have been equally unavailing. In truth, the Scottish peasantry are still infected with that rage for funeral ceremonial, which once distinguished the grandees of the kingdom so much, that a sumptuary law was made by the Parliament of Scotland for the purpose of restraining it ; and I have known many in the lowest stations, who have denied themselves not merely the comforts, but almost the necessities of life, in order to save such a sum of money as might enable their surviving friends to bury them like Christians, as they termed it ; nor could their faithful executors be prevailed upon, though equally necessitous, to turn to the use and maintenance of the living, the money vainly wasted upon the interment of the dead.

The procession to the church-yard, at about half-a-mile's distance, was made with the mournful solemnity usual on these occasions,—the body was consigned to its parent earth,—and when the labour of the grave-diggers had filled up the trench, and covered it with fresh sod, Mr Oldbuck, taking his hat off, saluted the assistants, who had stood by in melancholy silence, and with that adieu dispersed the mourners.

The clergyman offered our Antiquary his company to walk homeward ; but Mr Oldbuck had been so much struck with the deportment of the fisherman and his mother, that, moved by compas-

sion, and perhaps also, in some degree, by that curiosity which induces us to seek out even what gives us pain to witness, he preferred a solitary walk by the coast, for the purpose of again visiting the cottage as he passed.

CHAPTER III.

What is this secret sin, this untold tale,
That art cannot extract, nor penance cleanse?

• • ————— Her muscles hold their place ;
Nor discomposed, nor formed to steadiness,
No sudden flushing, and no faltering lip.—

Mysterious Mother.

THE coffin had been borne from the place where it rested. The mourners, in regular gradation, according to their rank or their relationship to the deceased, had filed from the cottage, while the younger male children were led along to totter after the bier of their brother, and to view with wonder a ceremonial which they could hardly comprehend. The female gossips next rose to depart, and, with consideration for the situation of the parents, carried along with them the girls of the family, to give the unhappy pair time and opportunity to open their hearts to each other, and soften their grief by communicating it. But their kind intention was without effect. The last of them had

darkened the entrance of the cottage, as she went out, and drawn the door softly behind her, when the father, first ascertaining by a hasty glance that no stranger remained, started up, clasped his hands wildly above his head, uttered a cry of the despair which he had hitherto repressed, and, in all the impotent impatience of grief, half rushed half staggered forward to the bed on which the coffin had been deposited, threw himself down upon it, and smothering, as it were, his head among the bed-clothes, gave vent to the full passion of his sorrow. It was in vain that the wretched mother, terrified by the vehemence of her husband's affliction—affliction still more fearful as agitating a man of hardened manners and a robust frame—suppressed her own sobs and tears, and, pulling him by the skirts of his coat, implored him to rise and remember, that, though one was removed, he had still a wife and children to comfort and support. The appeal came at too early a period of his anguish, and was totally unattended to; he continued to remain prostrate, indicating, by sobs so bitter and violent that they shook the bed and partition against which it rested, by clenched hands which grasped the bed-clothes, and by the vehement and convulsive motion of his legs, how deep and how terrible was the agony of a father's sorrow.

“O, what a day is this! what a day is this!” said the poor mother, her womanish affliction already

exhausted by sobs and tears, and now almost lost in terror for the state in which she beheld her husband; "O, what an hour is this! and naebody to help a poor lone woman—O, gudemither, could ye but speak a word to him!—wad ye but bid him be comforted!"

To her astonishment, and even to the increase of her fear, her husband's mother heard and answered the appeal. She rose and walked across the floor without support, and without much apparent feebleness, and standing by the bed on which her son had extended himself, she said, "Rise up, my son, and sorrow not for him that is beyond sin and sorrow and temptation—Sorrow is for those that remain in this vale of sorrow and darkness—I, wha dinna sorrow, and wha canna sorrow, for ony ane, hae maist need that ye should a' sorrow for me."

The voice of his mother, not heard for years as taking part in the active duties of life, or offering advice or consolation, produced its effect upon her son. He assumed a sitting posture on the side of the bed, and his appearance, attitude, and gestures, changed from those of angry despair to deep grief and dejection. The grandmother retired to her nook, the mother mechanically took in her hand her tattered Bible, and seemed to read, though her eyes were drowned with tears.

They were thus occupied, when a loud knock was heard at the door.

“Heh sirs!” said the poor mother, “wha is it that can be coming in that gate e’enow?—They canna hae heard o’ our misfortune, I’m sure.”

The knock being repeated, she rose and opened the door, saying querulously, “Whatna gait’s that to disturb a sorrowfu’ house?”

A tall man in black stood before her, whom she instantly recognised to be Lord Glenallan.

“Is there not,” he said, “an old woman lodging in this or one of the neighbouring cottages, called Elspeth, who was long resident at Craighburnfoot of Glenallan?”

“It’s my gudemither, my lord,” said Margaret; “but she canna see ony body e’enow—Ohon! we’re dreeing a sair weird—we hae had a heavy dispensation!”

“God forbid,” said Lord Glenallan, “that I should on light occasion disturb your sorrow—but my days are numbered—your mother-in-law is in the extremity of age, and, if I see her not to-day, we may never meet on this side of time.”

“And what wad ye see at an auld woman, broken down wi’ age and sorrow and heartbreak?—Gentle or semple shall not darken my doors the day my bairn’s been carried out a corpse.”

While she spoke thus, indulging the natural irritability of disposition and profession, which began to mingle itself in some degree with her grief when its first uncontroled bursts were gone by,

she held the door about one-third part open, and placed herself in the gap, as if to render the visitor's entrance impossible. But the voice of her husband was heard from within—"Wha's that, Maggie? what for are ye steeking them out?—let them come in—it doesna signify an auld rope's end wha' comes in or wha' gaes out o' this house frae this time forward."

The woman stood aside at her husband's command, and permitted Lord Glenallan to enter the hut. The dejection exhibited in his broken frame and emaciated countenance, formed a strong contrast with the effects of grief, as they were displayed in the rude and weatherbeaten visage of the fisherman, and the masculine features of his wife. He approached the old woman as she was seated on her usual settle, and asked her, in a tone as audible as his voice could make it, "Are you Elspeth of the Craighburnfoot of Glenallan?"

"Wha is it that asks about the unhallowed residence of that evil woman?" was the answer returned to his query.

"The unhappy Earl of Glenallan."

"Earl—Earl of Glenallan!"

"He who was called William Lord Geraldin," said the Earl; "and whom his mother's death has made Earl of Glenallan."

"Open the bole," said the old woman firmly and hastily to her daughter-in-law, "open the bole

wi' speed, that I may see if this be the right Lord Geraldin—the son of my mistress—him that I received in my arms within the hour after he was born—him that has reason to curse me that I didna smother him before the hour was past !”

The window, which had been shut, in order that a gloomy twilight might add to the solemnity of the funeral meeting, was opened as she commanded, and threw a sudden and strong light through the smoky and misty atmosphere of the stifling cabin. Falling in a stream upon the chimney, the rays illuminated, in the way that Rembrandt would have chosen, the features of the unfortunate nobleman, and those of the old sybil, who now, standing upon her feet, and holding him by one hand, peered anxiously in his features with her light-blue eyes, and holding her long and withered fore-finger within a small distance of his face, moved it slowly as if to trace the outlines, and reconcile what she recollected with that she now beheld. As she finished her scrutiny, she said, with a deep sigh, “ It’s a sair—sair change—and wha’s fault is it ?—but that’s written down where it will be remembered—it’s written on tablets of brass with a pen of steel, where all is recorded that is done in the flesh.—And what,” she said, after a pause, “ what is Lord Geraldin seeking from a puir auld creature like me, that’s dead already, and

only belongs sae far to the living that she isna yet laid in the moulds ?”

“ Nay,” answered Lord Glenallan, “ in the name of Heaven, why was it, that you requested so urgently to see me ? and why did you back your request by sending a token, which you knew well I dared not refuse ?”

As he spoke thus, he took from his purse the ring which Edie Ochiltree had delivered to him at Glenallan-house. The sight of this token produced a strange and instantaneous effect upon the old woman. The palsy of fear was immediately added to that of age, and she began instantly to search her pockets with the tremulous and hasty agitation of one who becomes first apprehensive of having lost something of great importance—then, as if convinced of the reality of her fears, she turned to the Earl, and demanded, “ And how came ye by it, then ?—how came ye by it ?—I thought I had kept it sae securely—what will the Countess say ?”

“ You know,” said the Earl, “ at least you must have heard, that my mother is dead.”

“ Dead ! are ye no imposing upon me ? has she left a’ at last, lands and lordship and lincages ?”

“ All, all,” said the Earl, “ as mortals must leave all human vanities.”

“ I mind now,” answered Elspeth, “ I heard of it before ; but there has been sic distress in our house since, and my memory is sae muckle im-

paired—But ye are sure your mother, the Lady Countess, is gane hame?”

The Earl again assured her that her former mistress was no more.

“Then,” said Elspeth, “it shall burden my mind nae langer!—When she lived, wha dared to speak what it would hae displeased her to hae had noised abroad?—But she’s gane—and I will confess all.”

Then, turning to her son and daughter-in-law, she commanded them imperatively to quit the house, and leave Lord Geraldin (for so she still called him) alone with her. But Maggie Mucklebackit, her first burst of grief being over, was by no means disposed in her own house to pay passive obedience to the commands of her mother-in-law, an authority which is peculiarly obnoxious to persons in her rank of life, and which she was the more astonished at hearing revived, when it seemed to have been so long relinquished and forgotten.

“It was an unco’ thing,” she said, in a grumbling tone of voice,—for the rank of Lord Glenallan was somewhat imposing—“it was an unco’ thing to bid a mother leave her ain house wi’ the tear in her e’e, the moment her eldest son had been carried a corpse out at the door o’t.”

The fisherman, in a stubborn and sullen tone, added to the same purpose, “This is nae day for your auld warld stories, mother—My lord, if he

be a lord, may ca' some other day—or he may speak out what he has gotten to say if he likes it—There's nane here will think it worth their while to listen to him or you either. But neither for laird or loon, gentle or simple, will I leave my ain house to pleasure ony body on the very day my poor"——

Here his voice choked, and he could proceed no farther; but as he had risen when Lord Glenallan came in, and had since remained standing, he now threw himself doggedly upon a seat, and remained in the sullen posture of one who was determined to keep his word.

But the old woman, whom this crisis seemed to repossess in all those powers of mental superiority with which she had once been eminently gifted, arose, and, advancing towards him, said with a solemn voice, "My son, as ye wad shun hearing of your mother's shame,—as ye wad not willingly be a witness of her guilt,—as ye wad deserve her blessing and avoid her curse, I charge ye, by the body that bore and that nursed ye, to leave me at freedom to speak with Lord Geraldin, what nae mortal ears but his ain maun listen to. Obey my words, that when ye lay the moulds on my head, (and O, that the day were come!) ye may remember this hour without the reproach of having disobeyed the last earthly command that ever your mother wared on you."

The terms of this solemn charge revived in the fisherman's heart the habit of instinctive obedience, in which his mother had trained him up, and to which he had submitted implicitly while her powers of exacting it remained entire. The recollection mingled also with the prevailing passion of the moment; for, glancing his eye at the bed on which the dead body had been laid, he muttered to himself, "*He* never disobeyed *me*, in reason or out-o' reason, and what for should I vex *her*?" Then, taking his reluctant spouse by the arm, he led her gently out of the cottage, and latched the door behind them as he left it.

As the unhappy parents withdrew, Lord Glenallan, to prevent the old woman from relapsing into her lethargy, again pressed her on the subject of the communication which she proposed to make to him.

"Ye will have it sune enough," she replied; "my mind's clear enough now, and there is not—I think there is not—a chance of my forgetting what I have to say. My dwelling at Craighburnfoot is before my een, as it were present in reality—the green bank, just where the burn met wi' the sea—the twa little barks, wi' their sails furled, lying in the natural cove which it formed—the high cliff that joined it with the pleasure-grounds of the house of Glenallan, and hung right ower the stream—Ah! yes, I may forget that I had a husband and

have lost him—that I hae but ane alive of our four fair sons—that misfortune upon misfortune has devoured our ill-gotten wealth—that they carried the corpse of my son's eldest-born frae the house this morning—But I never can forget the days I spent at bonny Craighburnfoot !”

“ You were a favourite of my mother,” said Lord Glenallan, desirous to bring her back to the point, from which she was wandering.

“ I was, I was,—ye needna mind me o' that. She brought me up abune my station, and wi' knowledge mair than my fellows—but, like the tempter of auld, wi' the knowledge of gude she taught me the knowledge of evil.”

“ For God's sake, Elspeth,” said the astonished Earl, “ proceed, if you can, to explain the dreadful hints you have thrown out !—I well know you are confident to one dreadful secret, which should split this roof even to hear it named—but speak on farther.”

“ I will,” she said,—“ I will—just bear wi' me for a little ;”—and again she seemed lost in recollection, but it was no longer tinged with imbecillity or apathy. She was now entering upon the topic which had long loaded her mind, and which doubtless often occupied her whole soul at times when she seemed dead to all around her. And I may add, as a remarkable fact, that such was the intense operation of mental energy upon her physical •

powers and nervous system, that, notwithstanding her infirmity of deafness, each word that Lord Glenallan spoke during this remarkable conference, although in the lowest tone of horror or agony, fell as full and distinct upon Elspeth's ear as it could have done at any period of her life. She spoke also herself clearly, distinctly, and slowly, as if anxious that the intelligence she communicated should be fully understood; concisely at the same time, and with none of the verbiage or circumlocutory additions natural to those of her sex and condition. In short, her language bespoke a better education, as well as an uncommonly firm and resolved mind, and a character of that sort from which great virtues or great crimes may be naturally expected. The tenor of her communication is disclosed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

Remorse—she ne'er forsakes us—

A bloodhound staunch—she tracks our rapid step
Through the wild labyrinth of youthful frenzy,
Unheard, perchance, until old age hath tamed us ;
Then in our lair, when Time hath chill'd our joints,
And maim'd our hope of combat, or of flight,
We hear her deep-mouth'd bay, announcing all
Of wrath and woe and punishment that bides us.

Old Play.

“ I NEED not tell you,” said the old woman, addressing the Earl of Glenallan, “ that I was the favourite and confidential attendant of Joscelind, Countess of Glenallan, whom God assoilzie !”—(here she crossed herself)—“ and, I think farther, ye may not have forgotten, that I shared her regard for many years. I returned it by the maist sincere attachment, but I fell into disgrace frae a trifling act of disobedience, reported to your mother by ane that thought, and she wasna wrang, that I was a spy upon her actions and yours.”

“ I charge thee, woman,” said the Earl, in a voice trembling with passion, “ name not her name in my hearing !”

“ I MUST,” returned the penitent firmly and calmly, “ or how can you understand me ?”

The Earl leaned upon one of the wooden chairs of the hut, drew his hat over his face, clenched his hands together, set his teeth like one who summons up courage to undergo a painful operation, and made a signal to her to proceed.

“ I say, then,” she resumed, “ that my disgrace with my mistress was chiefly owing to Miss Eveline Neville, then bred up in Glenallan-house as the daughter of a cousin-german and intimate friend of your father that was gane. There was muckle mystery in her history, but wha dared to enquire farther than the Countess liked to tell?—All in Glenallan-house loved Miss Neville—all but twa—your mother and mysel—we baith hated her.”

“ God ! for what reason, since a creature so mild, so gentle, so formed to inspire affection, never walked on this wretched world ?”

“ It may hae been sae,” rejoined Elspeth, “ but your mother hated a’ that cam of your father’s family—a’ but himsel. Her reasons related to strife which fell between them soon after her marriage ; the particulars are naething to this purpose. But, O, doubly did she hate Eveline Neville when she perceived that there was a growing kindness atween you and that unfortunate young leddy ! Ye may mind that the Countess’s dislike didna gang far-

ther at first than just shewing o' the cauld shouter —at least it wasna seen farther: but at the lang run it brak out into such downright violence that Miss Neville was even fain to seek refuge at Knock-winnock castle with Sir Arthur's leddy, wha (God sain her) was then wi' the living."

" You rend my heart by recalling these particulars—but go on, and may my present agony be accepted as additional penance for the involuntary crime !"

" She had been absent some months," continued Elspeth, " when I was ae night watching in my hut the return of my husband from fishing, and shedding in private those bitter tears that my proud spirit wrung frae me whenever I thought on my disgrace. The sneck was drawn, and the Countess, your mother, entered my dwelling. I thought I had seen a spectre, for, even in the height of my favour, this was an honour she had never done me, and she looked as pale and ghastly as if she had risen fra the grave. She sate down and wrung the draps from her hair and cloak, for the night was drizzling, and her walk had been through the plantations, that were a' loaded with dew. I only mention these things that you may understand how weel that night lives in my memory, and weel it may. I was surprised to see her, but I durstna speak first, mair than if I had seen a phantom—Na, I durst not, my lord, I that hae seen mony

sights of terror, and never shook at them—Sae, after a silence, she said, ‘ Elspeth Cheyne, (for she always gave me my maiden name,) are not ye the daughter of that Reginald Cheyne, who died to save his master, Lord Glenallan, on the field of Sheriffmuir?’ And I answered her as proudly as hersel nearly—‘ As sure as you are the daughter of that Earl of Glenallan whom my father saved that day by his own death.’”

Here she made a deep pause.

“ And what followed?—what followed?—For heaven’s sake, good woman——But why should I use that word?—Yet, good or bad, I command you to tell me.”

“ And little I should value earthly command,” answered Elspeth, “ were there not a voice that has spoken to me, sleeping and waking, that drives me forward to tell this sad tale.—Aweel, my lord—the Countess said to me, ‘ My son loves Eveline Neville—they are agreed—they are plighted;—should they have a son, my right over Glenallan merges—I sink, from that moment, from a Countess into a miserable stipendiary dowager—I, who brought lands and vassals, and high blood and ancient fame, to my husband, I must cease to be mistress when my son has an heir-male. But I care not for that—had he married any but one of the hated Nevilles I had been patient—But for them—that they and their descendants should enjoy the

rights and honours of my ancestors, goes through my heart like a two-edged dirk. And this girl—I detest her!”—And I answered, for my heart kindled at her words, that her hate was equalled by mine.”

“Wretch!” exclaimed the Earl, in spite of his determination to preserve silence,—“Wretched woman! what cause of hate could have arisen from a being so innocent and gentle?”

“I hated what my mistress hated, as was the use with the liege vassals of the house of Glenallan; for though, my lord, I married under my degree, yet an ancestor of yours never went to the field of battle, but an ancestor of the frail, demented, auld, useless wretch wha now speaks with you, carried his shield before him.—But that was not a’,” continued the beldame, her earthly and evil passions rekindling as she became heated in her narration; “that was not a’—I hated Miss Eveline Neville for her ain sake—I brought her frae England, and, during our whole journey, she gecked and scorned at my northern speech and habit, as her southland leddies and kimmers had done at the boarding-school as they ca’d it (and, strange as it may seem, she spoke of an affront offered by a heedless school-girl without intention, with a degree of inveteracy, which, at such a distance of time, a mortal offence would neither have authorised or excited in any well constituted mind)—Yes, she

scorned and jested at me—but let them that scorn the tartan fear the dirk !”

She paused, and then went on. “ But I deny not that I hated her mair than she deserved. My mistress, the Countess, persevered and said, ‘ Elspeth Cheyne, this unruly boy will marry with the false English blood—were days as they have been, I could throw her into the Massymore of Glenallan, and fetter him in the Keep of Strathbonnel—But these times are past, and the authority which the nobles of the land should exercise is delegated to quibbling lawyers and their baser dependants. Hear me, Elspeth Cheyne ! If you are your father’s daughter as I am mine, I will find means that they shall not marry—She walks often to that cliff that overhangs your dwelling to look for her lover’s boat, (ye may remember the pleasure ye then took on the sea, my lord)—let him find her forty fathom lower than he expects !—Yes !—ye may stare and frown and clench your hand, but, as sure as I am to face the only Being I ever feared,—and O that I had feared him mair !—these were your mother’s words—what avails it to me to lie to you ?—But I wadna consent to stain my hand with blood.—Then she said, ‘ By the religion of our holy Church they are ower *sibb* thegither. But I expect nothing but that both will become heretics as well as disobedient reprobates,’ that was her addition to that argument—And then, as the fiend is ever

ower busy wi' brains like mine, that are subtle beyond their use and station, I was unhappily permitted to add—' But they might be brought to think themselves sae *sibb* as no Christian law will permit their wedlock.' ”

Here the Earl of Glenallan echoed her words with a shriek so piercing, as almost to rend the roof of the cottage—“ Ah ! then Eveline Neville was not the—the”——

“ The daughter, ye would say, of your father ? ” continued Elspeth ; “ No—be it a torment or be it a comfort to you—ken the truth, she was nae mair a daughter of your father's house than I am.”

“ Woman, deceive me not—make me not curse the memory of the parent I have so lately laid in the grave, for sharing in a plot the most cruel, the most infernal”——

“ Bethink ye, my Lord Geraldin, ere ye curse the memory of a parent that's gane, is there none of the blood of Glenallan living, whose faults have led to this dreadful catastrophe ? ”

“ Mean you my brother ?—he, too, is gone,” said the Earl.

“ No,” replied the sybil, “ I mean yoursel, Lord Geraldin. Had you not transgressed the obedience of a son by wedding Eveline Neville in secret while a guest at Knockwinnock, our plot might have separated you for a time, but would have left at least your sorrows without remorse to canker them—But

your ain conduct had put poison in the weapon that we threw, and it pierced you with the mair force, because ye cam rushing to meet it. Had your marriage been a proclaimed and acknowledged action, our stratagem to throw an obstacle into your way that couldna be got ower, neither wad nor could hae been practised against ye."

"Great Heaven!" said the unfortunate nobleman; "it is as if a film fell from my obscured eyes!—Yes, I now well understand the doubtful hints of consolation thrown out by my wretched mother, tending indirectly to impeach the evidence of the horrors of which her arts had led me to believe myself guilty."

"She could not speak mair plainly," answered Elspeth, "without confessing her ain fraud, and she would have submitted to be torn by wild horses, rather than unfold what she had done; and, if she had still lived, so would I for her sake. They were stout hearts the race of Glenallan, male and female, and sac were a' that in auld times cried their gathering-word of *Clochnaben*—they stood shouter to shouter—Nae man parted frae his chief for love of gold or of gain, or of right or of wrang.—The times are changed, I hear, now."

The unfortunate nobleman was too much wrapped up in his own confused and distracting reflections to notice the rude expressions of savage fidelity, in which, even in the latest cbb of life, the

unhappy author of his misfortunes seemed to find a stern and stubborn source of consolation.

“Great Heaven!” he exclaimed, “I am then free from a guilt the most horrible with which man can be stained, and the sense of which, however involuntary, has wrecked my peace, destroyed my health, and bowed me down to an untimely grave. Accept,” he fervently uttered, lifting his eyes upwards, “accept my humble thanks!—If I live miserable, at least I shall not die stained with that unnatural guilt!—And thou—proceed if thou hast more to tell—proceed while thou hast voice to speak it, and I have powers to listen.”

“Yes,” answered the beldame, “the hour when you shall hear, and I shall speak, is indeed passing rapidly away—Death has crossed your brow with his finger, and I find his grasp turning every day caulder at my heart.—Interrupt me nae mair with exclamations and groans and accusations, but hear my tale to an end! And then—if ye be indeed sic a Lord of Glenallan as I hae heard of in *my* day—make your merrymen gather the thorn, and the briar, and the green hollin, till they heap them as high as the house-riggin’, and burn! burn! burn! the auld witch Kilsbeth, and a’ that can put ye in mind that sic a creature ever crawled upon the land!”

“Go on,” said the Earl, “go on—I will not again interrupt you.”

He spoke in a half-suffocated yet determined voice, resolved that no irritability on his part should deprive him of this opportunity of acquiring proofs of the wonderful tale he then heard. But Elspeth had become exhausted by a continuous narration of such unusual length ; the subsequent part of her story was more broken, and, though still distinctly intelligible in most parts, had no longer the lucid conciseness which the first part of her narrative had displayed to such an astonishing degree. Lord Glenallan found it necessary, when she had made some attempts to continue her narrative without success, to prompt her memory, by demanding, what proofs she could propose to bring of the truth of a narrative so different from that which she had originally told ?

“ The evidence,” she replied, “ of Eveline Neville’s real birth was in the Countess’s possession, with reasons for its being, for some time, kept private. They may yet be found, if she has not destroyed them, in the left-hand drawer of the ebony cabinet that stood in the dressing-room—these she meant to suppress for the time until you went abroad again, when she trusted, before your return, to send Miss Neville back to her ain country, or to get her settled in marriage.”

“ But did you not shew me letters of my father’s, which seemed to me, unless my senses alto-

gether failed me in that horrible moment, to avow his relationship to—to the unhappy”——

“ We did ; and, with my testimony, how could you doubt the fact, or her either ?—But we suppressed the true explanation of these letters, and that was, that your father thought it right the young leddy should pass for his daughter for a while, on account o’ some family reasons that were amang them.”

“ But wherefore, when you learned our union, was this dreadful artifice persisted in ?”

“ It wasna,” she replied, “ till Lady Glenallan had communicated this fause tale that she suspected ye had actually made a marriage—nor even then did you avow it sae as to satisfy her, whether the ceremony had in verity passed atween ye or no—But ye remember, O ye canna but remember weel, what passed in that awfu’ meeting !”

“ Woman ! you swore upon the gospels to the fact which you now disavow.”

“ I did, and I wad hae ta’en a yet mair holy pledge on it, if there had been ane—I wad not hae spared the blood of my body, or the guilt of my soul, to serve the house of Glenallan.”

“ Wretch ! do you call that horrid perjury, attended with consequences yet more dreadful—do you esteem that a service to the house of your benefactors ?”

“ I served her, wha was then the head of Glenallan, as she required me to serve her. The cause was between God and her conscience—the manner between God and mine—She is gane to her account, and I maun follow—Have I tauld you a’ ?”

“ No,” answered Lord Glenallan ; “ you have yet more to tell—you have to tell me of the death of the angel whom your perjury drove to despair, stained, as she thought herself, with a crime so horrible—Speak truth—was that dreadful—was that horrible incident”—he could scarcely articulate the words—“ was it as reported ? or was it an act of yet further, though not more atrocious cruelty, inflicted by others ?”

“ I understand you,” said Elspeth ; “ but report spoke truth—our false witness was indeed the cause, but the deed was her ain distracted act—On that fearfu’ disclosure, when ye rushed frae the Countess’s presence, and saddled your horse, and left the castle like a fire-flaught, the Countess hadna yet discovered your private marriage ; she hadna fund out that the union, which she had framed this awfu’ tale to prevent, had e’en ta’en place. Ye fled from the house as if the fire o’ Heaven was about to fa’ upon it, and Miss Neville, atween reason and the want o’t, was put under sure ward But the ward sleep’t, and the prisoner waked—the window was open—the way was before her—

there was the cliff, and there was the sea!—O, when will I forget that!”

“And thus died,” said the Earl, “even so as was reported?”

“No, my lord. I had gane out to the cove—the tide was in, and it flowed, as ye’ll remember, to the foot of that cliff—it was a great convenience that for my husband’s trade—Where am I wandering?—I saw a white object dart frae the tap o’ the cliff like a sea-maw through the mist, and then a heavy flash and sparkle of the waters shewed me it was a human creature that had fa’en into the waves. I was bold and strong, and familiar with the tide. I rushed in and grasped her gown, and drew her out and carried her on my shouthers—I could hae carried twa sic then—carried her to my hut, and laid her on my bed. Neighbours cam and brought help—but the words she uttered in her ravings, when she got back the use of speech, were such, that I was fain to send them awa’, and get up word to Glenallan-house. The Countess sent down her Spanish servant Teresa—if ever there was a fiend on earth in human form, that woman was anc—She and I were to watch the unhappy leddy, and let no other person approach. God knows what Teresa’s part was to hae been—she tauld it not to me—but Heaven took the conclusion in its ain hand. The poor leddy! she took the pangs of travail before her time, bore a male

child, and died in the arms of me—of her mortal enemy!—Aye, *ye* may weep—she was a sightly creature to see to—but think ye, if I didna mourn her then, that I can mourn her now?—Na, na!—I left Teresa wi' the dead corpse and new-born babe, till I gaed up to take the Countess's commands what was to be done. Late as it was, I ca'd her up, and she gar'd me ca' up your brother"—

"My brother?"

"Yes, Lord Geraldin, c'en your brother, that some said she aye wished to be her heir. At ony rate, he was the person maist concerned in the succession and heritance of the house of Glenallan."

"And is it possible to believe, then, that my brother, out of avarice to grasp at my inheritance, would lend himself to such a base and dreadful stratagem?"

"Your mother believed it," said the old beldame with a fiendish laugh—"it was nae plot of my making—but what they did or said I will not say, because I did not hear. Lang and sair they consulted in the black wainscot dressing-room; and when your brother passed through the room where I was waiting, it seemed to me (and I have often thought sae since syne) that the fire of hell was in his cheek and een. But he had left some of it with his mother at ony rate. She entered the room like a woman demented, and the first words

she spoke were, ‘ Elspeth Cheyne, did ye ever pull a new-budded flower ?’ I answered, as ye may believe, that I often had ; ‘ then,’ said she, ‘ ye will ken the better how to blight the spurious and heretical blossom that has sprung forth this night to disgrace my father’s noble house—See here ;’—(and she gave me a golden bodkin)—‘ Nothing but gold must shed the blood of Glenallan. This child is already as one of the dead, and since thou and Teresa alone ken that it lives, let it be dealt upon as ye will answer to me !’ and she turned away in her fury, and left me with the bodkin in my hand. Here it is ; that and the ring of Miss Neville are a’ I hae preserved of my ill-gotten gear—for muckle was the gear I got. And weel hae I keepit the secret, but no for the gowd or gear either.”

Her long and bony hand held out to Lord Glenallan a gold bodkin, down which in fancy he saw the blood of his infant trickling.

“ Wretch ! had you the heart ?”

“ I kenna if I could hae had it or no. I returned to my cottage without feeling the ground that I trod on ; but Teresa and the child were gane—a’ that was alive was gane—naething left but the lifeless corpse.”

“ And did you never learn my infant’s fate ?”

“ I could but guess. I have tauld ye your mother’s purpose, and I ken Teresa was a fiend. She

was never mair seen in Scotland, and I have heard that she returned to her ain land. A dark curtain has fa'en ower the past, and the few that witnessed ony part of it could only surmise something of seduction and suicide. You yourself"——

"I know—I know it all," answered the Earl.

"You indeed know all that I can say—And now, heir of Glenallan, can you forgive me?"

"Ask forgiveness of God, and not of man," said the Earl, turning away.

"And how shall I ask of the pure and unstained what is denied to me by a sinner like myself?—If I hae sinned, hae I not suffered?—Hae I had a day's peace or an hour's rest since these lang wet locks of hair first lay upon my pillow at Craighburnfoot?—Has not my house been burned, wi' my bairn in the cradle?—Has not my boats been wrecked when a' others weathered the gale?—Has not a' that were near and dear to me dree'd penance for my sin?—Has not the fire had its share o' them—the winds had their part—the sea had her part?—And oh!" (she added, with a lengthened groan, looking first upwards towards Heaven, and then bending her eyes on the floor) —"Oh! that the earth would take her part, that's been lang lang wearying to be joined to it!"

Lord Glenallan had reached the door of the cottage, but the generosity of his nature did not permit him to leave the unhappy woman in this state

of desperate reprobation. “May God forgive thee, wretched woman,” he said, “as sincerely as I do!—turn for mercy to Him, who can alone grant mercy, and may your prayers be heard as if they were mine own!—I will send a religious man.”

“Na, na, nae priest! nae priest!” she ejaculated; and the door of the cottage opening as she spoke, prevented her from proceeding.

CHAPTER V.

Still in his dead hand clench'd remain the strings
That thrill his father's heart—e'en as the limb,
Lopp'd off and laid in grave, retains, they tell us,
Strange commerce with the mutilated stump,
Whose nerves are twinging still in maim'd existence.

Old Play.

THE Antiquary, as we informed the reader in the end of chapter second, had shaken off the company of worthy Mr Blattergowl, although he offered to entertain him with an abstract of the ablest speech he had ever known in the tieud court, delivered by the procurator for the church in the remarkable case of the parish of Gatherem. Resisting this temptation, our senior preferred a solitary path, which again conducted him to the cottage of Mucklebackit. When he came in front of the fisherman's hut, he observed a man working intently, as if to repair a shattered boat which lay upon the beach, and, going up to him, was surprised to find it was Mucklebackit himself. "I am glad," he said, in a tone of sympathy—"I am glad,

Saunders, that you feel yourself able to make this exertion."

"And what would ye have me to do," answered the fisher gruffly, "unless I wanted to see four children starve, because ane is drowned? It's weel wi' you gentles, that can sit in the house wi' handkerchers at your een when ye lose a friend; but the like o' us maun to our warks again, if our hearts were beating as hard as my hammer."

Without taking more notice of Oldbuck he proceeded in his labour; and the Antiquary, to whom the display of human nature under the influence of agitating passions was never indifferent, stood beside him, in silent attention, as if watching the progress of the work. He observed more than once the man's hard features, as if by the force of association, prepare to accompany the sound of the saw and hammer with his usual symphony of a rude tune hummed or whistled, and as often a slight twitch of convulsive expression showed that, ere the sound was uttered, a cause for suppressing it rushed upon his mind. At length, when he had patched a considerable rent, and was beginning to mend another, his feelings appeared altogether to derange the power of attention necessary for his work. The piece of wood which he was about to nail on was at first too long; then he sawed it off too short; then chose another equally ill adapted for the purpose. At length, throwing it down in

anger, after wiping his dim eye with his quivering hand, he exclaimed, "There is a curse either on me or on this auld black bitch of a boat, that I have hauled up high and dry, and patched and clouted sae mony years, that she might drown my poor Steenie at the end of them, an' be d—d to her!" and he flung his hammer against the boat, as if she had been the intentional cause of his misfortune. Then recollecting himself, he added, "Yet what needs ane be angry at her, that has neither soul nor sense?—though I am no that muckle better mysel. She's but a rickle o' auld rotten deals nailed thegither, and warped wi' the wind and the sea—and I am a dour carle, battered by foul weather at sea and land till I am maist as senseless as hersel. She maun be mended though again the morning tide—that's a thing o' necessity."

Thus speaking, he went to gather together his instruments and attempt to resume his labour, but Oldbuck took him kindly by the arm. "Come, come," he said, "Saunders, there is no work for you this day—I'll send down Shavings the carpenter to mend the boat, and he may put the day's work into my account—and you had better not rise to-morrow, but stay to comfort your family under this dispensation, and the gardener will bring you some vegetables and meal from Monk-barns."

“ I thank ye, Monkbarns,” answered the poor fisher; “ I am a plain-spoken man, and hae little to say for mysel; I might hae learned fairer fashions frae my mither lang syne, but I never saw muckle gude they did her; however, I thank ye. Ye were aye kind and neighbourly, whatever folk says o’ your being near and close; and I hae often said in thae times when they were ganging to raise up the puir folk against the gentles—I hae often said, ne’er a man should steer a hair touching to Monkbarns while Steenie and I could wag a finger—and so said Steenie too. And, Monkbarns, when ye laid his head in the grave, (and mony thanks for the respect,) ye saw the mouls laid on an honest lad that likit you weel, though he made little phrase about it.”

Oldbuck, beaten from the pride of his affected cynicism, would not willingly have had any one by upon that occasion to quote to him his favourite maxims of the Stoic philosophy. The large drops fell fast from his own eyes, as he begged the father, who was now melted at recollecting the bravery and generous sentiments of his son, to forbear useless sorrow, and led him by the arm towards his own home, where another scene awaited our Antiquary. As he entered, the first person whom he beheld was Lord Glenallan.

Mutual surprise was in their countenances as they saluted each other, with haughty reserve on

the part of Mr Oldbuck, and embarrassment on *that of the Earl.*

“ My Lord Glenallan, I think ?” said Mr Oldbuck.

“ Yes—much changed from what he was when he knew Mr Oldbuck.”

“ I do not mean,” said the Antiquary, “ to intrude upon your lordship—I only came to see this distressed family.”

“ And you have found one, sir, who has still greater claims on your compassion.”

“ My compassion ? Lord Glenallan cannot need *my* compassion—if Lord Glenallan could need it, I think he would hardly ask it.”

“ Our former acquaintance,” said the Earl—

“ Is of such ancient date, my lord—was of such short duration, and was connected with circumstances so exquisitely painful, that I think we may dispense with renewing it.”

So saying, the Antiquary turned away, and left the hut ; but Lord Glenallan followed him into the open air, and, in spite of a hasty “ Good morning, my lord,” requested a few minutes conversation, and the favour of his advice in an important matter.

“ Your lordship will find many more capable to advise you, my lord, and by whom your intercourse will be deemed an honour. For me, I am a man retired from business and the world, and not very fond of raking up the past events of my use-

less life ; and forgive me if I say, I have particular pain in reverting to that period of it when I acted like a fool, and your lordship like"—He stopped short.

"Like a villain, you would say," said Lord Glenallan, "for such I must have appeared to you."

"My lord—my lord, I have no desire to hear your shrift," said the Antiquary.

"But, sir, if I can shew you that I am more sinned against than sinning—that I have been a man miserable beyond the power of description, and who looks forward at this moment to an untimely grave as to a haven of rest, you will not refuse the confidence which, accepting your appearance at this critical moment as a hint from Heaven, I venture thus to press on you."

"Assuredly, my lord, I shall shun no longer the continuation of this extraordinary interview."

"I must then recall to you our occasional meeting upwards of twenty years since at Knockwinnock castle, and I need not remind you of a lady who was then a member of that family."

"The unfortunate Miss Eveline Neville, my lord—I remember it well."

"Towards whom you entertained sentiments"—

"Very different from those with which I before and since have regarded her sex ; her gentleness, her docility, her pleasure in the studies which I pointed out to her, attached my affections more

than became my age (though that was not then much advanced,) or the solidity of my character. But I need not remind your lordship of the various modes in which you indulged your gaiety at the expence of an awkward and retired student, embarrassed by the expression of feelings so new to him, and I have no doubt that the young lady joined you in the well-deserved ridicule—It is the way of womankind. I have spoke at once to the painful circumstances of my addresses and their rejection, that your lordship may be satisfied every thing is full in my memory, and may, so far as I am concerned, tell your story without scruple or needless delicacy.”

“ I will,” said Lord Glenallan ; “ but first let me say, you do injustice to the memory of the gentlest and kindest, as well as to the most unhappy of women, to suppose she could make a jest of the honest affection of a man like you. Frequently did she blame me, Mr Oldbuck, for indulging my levity at your expence—may I now presume you will excuse the gay freedoms which then offended you ?—my state of mind has never since laid me under the necessity of apologizing for the inadvertencies of a light and happy temper.”

“ My lord, you are fully pardoned,” said Mr Oldbuck. “ You will be aware, that, like all others, I was ignorant at the time that I placed myself in competition with your lordship, and understood

that Miss Neville was in a state of dependence which might make her prefer a competent independence and the hand of an honest man—But I am wasting time—I would I could believe that the views entertained towards her by others were as fair and honest as mine !”

“ Mr Oldbuck, you judge harshly.”

“ Not without cause, my lord. When I only, of all the magistrates of this county, having neither, like some of them, the honour to be connected with your powerful family, nor, like others, the meanness to fear it—when I made some enquiry into the manner of Miss Neville’s death—I shake you, my lord, but I must be plain—I do own I had every reason to believe that she had met most unfair dealing, and had either been imposed upon by a counterfeit marriage, or that very strong measures had been adopted to stifle and destroy the evidence of a real union. And I cannot doubt in my own mind, that this cruelty on your lordship’s part, whether coming of your own free will, or proceeding from the influence of the late Countess, hurried the unfortunate young lady to the desperate act by which her life was terminated.”

“ You are deceived, Mr Oldbuck, into conclusions which are not just, however naturally they flow from the circumstances. Believe me, I respected you even when I was most embarrassed by your active attempts to investigate our family misfor-

tunes. *You shewed yourself more worthy of Miss Neville than I, by the spirit with which you persisted in vindicating her reputation even after her death. But the firm belief, that your well-meant efforts could only serve to bring to light a story too horrible to be detailed, induced me to join my unhappy mother in schemes to remove or destroy all evidence of the legal union which had taken place between Eveline and myself. And now let us sit down on this bank, for I feel unable to remain longer standing, and have the goodness to listen to the extraordinary discovery which I have this day made.*"

They sate down accordingly, and Lord Glenal-lan briefly narrated his unhappy family history—his concealed marriage—the horrible invention by which his mother had designed to render impossible that union which had already taken place. He detailed the arts by which the Countess, having all the documents relative to Miss Neville's birth in her hands, had produced those only relating to a period during which, for family reasons, his father had consented to own that young lady as his natural daughter, and shewed how impossible it was that he could either suspect or detect the fraud put upon him by his mother, and vouched by the oaths of her attendants, Teresa and Elspeth. "I left my paternal mansion," he concluded, "as if the furies of hell had driven me forth, and travelled

with frantic velocity I knew not whither. Nor have I the slightest recollection of what I did or whither I went, until I was discovered by my brother. I will not trouble you with an account of my sick-bed and recovery, or how, long afterwards, I ventured to enquire after the sharer of my misfortunes, and heard that her despair had found a dreadful remedy for all the ills of life. The first thing that roused me to thought was hearing of your enquiries into this cruel business; and you will hardly wonder, that, believing what I did believe, I should join in those expedients to stop your investigation, which my brother and mother had actively commenced. The information which I gave them concerning the circumstances and witnesses of our private marriage enabled them to baffle your zeal. The clergyman, therefore, and witnesses, as persons who had acted in the matter only to please the powerful heir of Glenallan, were accessible to his promises and threats, and were so provided for, that they had no objections to leave this country for another. For myself, Mr Oldbuck," pursued this unhappy man, "from that moment I considered myself as blotted out of the book of the living, and as having nothing left to do with this world. My mother tried to reconcile me to life by every art—even by intimations which I can now interpret as calculated to produce a doubt of the horrible tale she herself had fabricated. But I

construed all she said as the fictions of maternal affection.—I will forbear all reproach—she is no more—and, as her wretched associate said, she knew not how the dart was poisoned, or how deep it must sink, when she threw it from her hand. But, Mr Oldbuck, if ever, during these twenty years, there crawled upon earth a living being deserving of your pity, I have been that man. My food has not nourished me—my sleep has not refreshed me—my devotions have not comforted me—all that is cheering and necessary to man has been to me converted into poison. The rare and limited intercourse which I have held with others has been most odious to me. I felt as if I were bringing the contamination of unnatural and inexpressible guilt among the gay and the innocent. There have been moments when I had thoughts of another description—to plunge into the adventures of war, or to brave the dangers of the traveller in foreign and barbarous climates—to mingle in political intrigue, or to retire to the stern seclusion of the anchorites of our religion—All these are thoughts which have alternately passed through my mind, but each required an energy, which was mine no longer after the withering stroke I had received. I vegetated on as I could in the same spot,—fancy, feeling, judgment, and health, gradually decaying, like a tree whose bark has been destroyed,—when first the blossoms fade, then the boughs, until its state

resembles the decayed and dying trunk that is now before you. Do you now pity and forgive me?"

"My lord," answered the Antiquary, much affected; "my pity—my forgiveness, you have not to ask, for your dismal story is of itself not only an ample excuse for whatever appeared mysterious in your conduct, but a narrative that might move your worst enemies (and I, my lord, was never of the number) to tears and to sympathy. But permit me to ask what you now mean to do, and why you have honoured me, whose opinion can be of little consequence, with your confidence on this occasion?"

"Mr Oldbuck," answered the Earl, "as I could never have foreseen the nature of that confession which I have heard this day, I need not say, that I had no formed plan of consulting you or any one upon affairs, the tendency of which I could not even have suspected. But I am without friends, unused to business, and, by long retirement, unacquainted alike with the laws of the land and the habits of the living generation; and where, most unexpectedly, I find myself immersed in the matters of which I know least, I catch, like a drowning man, at the first support that offers. You are that support, Mr Oldbuck. I have always heard you mentioned as a man of wisdom and intelligence—I have known you myself as a man of a resolute and independent spirit—and there is one

circumstance." said he, " which ought to combine us in some degree—our having paid tribute to the same excellence of character in poor Eveline. You offered yourself to me in my need, and you were already acquainted with the beginning of my misfortunes. To you, therefore, I have recourse for advice, for sympathy, for support."

" You shall seek none of them in vain, my lord," said Oldbuck, " so far as my slender ability extends ; and I am honoured by the preference, whether it arises from choice or is prompted by chance. But this is a matter to be ripely considered. May I ask what are your principal views at present ?"

" To ascertain the fate of my child," said the Earl, " be the consequences what they may, and to do justice to the honour of Eveline, which I have only permitted to be suspected to avoid discovery of the yet more horrible taint to which I was made to believe it liable."

" And the memory of your mother ?"

" Must bear its own burthen," answered the Earl, with a sigh ; " better that she were justly convicted of deceit, should that be found necessary, than that others should be unjustly accused of crimes so much more dreadful."

" Then, my lord," said Oldbuck, " our first business must be to put the information of the old woman, Elspeth, into a regular and authenticated form."

“That,” said Lord Glenallan, “will be at present, I fear, impossible—She is exhausted herself, and surrounded by her distressed family. To-morrow, perhaps, when she is alone—and yet I doubt, from her imperfect sense of right and wrong, whether she would speak out in any one’s presence but my own—I too am sorely fatigued.”

“Then, my lord,” said the Antiquary, whom the interest of the moment elevated above points of expence and convenience, which had generally more than enough of weight with him, “I would propose to your lordship, instead of returning, fatigued as you are, so far as to Glenallan-house, or taking the more uncomfortable alternative of going to a bad inn at Fairport, to alarm all the busy bodies of the town—I would propose, I say, that you should be my guest at Monkbarns for this night—By to-morrow these poor people will have renewed their out-of-doors vocation, for sorrow with them affords no respite from labour, and we will visit the old woman, Elspeth, alone, and take down her examination.”

After a formal apology for the encroachment, Lord Glenallan agreed to go with him, and underwent with patience in their return home the whole history of John of the Girnell, a legend which Mr Oldbuck was never known to spare any one who crossed his threshold.

The arrival of a stranger of such note, with two saddle horses and a servant in black, which servant had holsters on his saddle bow, and a coronet upon the holsters, created a general commotion in the house of Monkbarns. Jenny Rintherout, scarce recovered from the hysterics which she had taken upon hearing of poor Steenie's misfortune, chased about the turkeys and poultry, cackled and screamed louder than they did, and ended by killing one-half too many. Miss Griselda made many wise reflections on the hot-headed wilfulness of her brother, who had occasioned such a devastation, by suddenly bringing in upon them a papist nobleman. And she ventured to transmit to Mr Blattergowl some hint of the unusual slaughter which had taken place in the *basse-cour*, which brought the honest clergyman to enquire how his friend Monkbarns had got home, and whether he was not the worse of being at the funeral, at a period so near the ringing of the bell for dinner, that the Antiquary had no choice left but to invite him to stay and bless the meat. Miss M'Intyre had on her part some curiosity to see this mighty peer of whom all had heard, as an eastern caliph or sultan is heard of by his subjects, and felt some degree of timidity at the idea of encountering a person, of whose unsocial habits and stern manners so many stories were told, that her fear kept at least pace

with her curiosity. The aged housekeeper was no less flustered and hurried in obeying the numerous and contradictory commands of her mistress, concerning preserves, pastry, and fruit, the mode of marshalling and dishing the dinner, the necessity of not permitting the melted butter to run to oil, and the danger of allowing Juno,—who, though formally banished from the parlour, failed not to maraud about the out-settlements of the family,—to enter the kitchen.

The only inmate of Monkbarns who remained entirely indifferent on this momentous occasion was Hector McIntyre, who cared no more for an Earl than he did for a commoner, and who was only interested in his visit, as it would afford some protection against his uncle's displeasure, if he harboured any, for his not attending the funeral, and still more against his satire upon the subject of his gallant but unsuccessful single combat with the phoca, or seal.

To these, the inmates of his household, Oldbuck presented the Earl of Glenallan, who underwent, with meek and subdued civility, the prosing speeches of the honest divine, and the lengthened apologies of Miss Griselda Oldbuck, which her brother in vain endeavoured to abridge. Before the dinner hour, Lord Glenallan requested permission to retire a while to his chamber. Mr Oldbuck ac-

accompanied his guest to the Green Room, which had been hastily prepared for his reception. He looked around with an air of painful recollection.

“ I think,” at length he observed, “ I think, Mr Oldbuck, that I have been in this apartment before.”

“ Yes, my lord,” answered Oldbuck, “ upon occasion of an excursion hither from Knockwinnock—and since we are upon a subject so melancholy, you may perhaps remember whose taste supplied these lines from Chaucer, which now form the motto of the tapestry.”

“ I guess,” said the Earl, “ though I cannot recollect—She excelled me, indeed, in literary taste and information, as in everything else ; and it is one of the mysterious dispensations of Providence, Mr Oldbuck, that a creature so excellent in mind and body should have been cut off in so miserable a manner, merely from her having formed a fatal attachment to such a wretch as I am.”

Mr Oldbuck did not attempt an answer to this burst of the grief which lay ever nearest to the heart of his guest, but, pressing Lord Glenallan's hand with one of his own, and drawing the other across his shaggy eyelashes, as if to brush away a mist that intercepted his sight, he left the Earl at liberty to arrange himself previous to dinner.

CHAPTER VI.

————— Life, with you,
Glow in the brain and dances in the arteries ;
'Tis like the wine some joyous guest hath quaff'd,
That glads the heart and elevates the fancy :—
Mine is the poor residuum of the cup,
Vapid, and dull, and tasteless, only soiling,
With its base dregs, the vessel that contains it.

Old Play.

“ Now only think what a man my brother is, Mr Blattergowl, for a wise man and a learned man, to bring this Yerl into our house without speaking a single word to a body !—And there's the distress of thae Mucklebackits—we canna get a fin o' fish—and we hae nae time to send ower to Fairport for beef, and the mutton's but new killed—and that silly fliskmahoy, Jenny Rintherout, has ta'en the exies, and done naething but laugh and greet, the skirl at the tail o' the guffá, for twa days successively—and now we maun ask that strange man, that's as grand and as grave as the Yerl himsel, to stand at the sideboard ! And I canna gang into the kitchen to direct ony thing,

for he's hovering there making some pousowdie for my lord, for he doesna eat like ither folk neither—And how to sort the strange servant man at dinner time—I am sure, Mr Blattergowl, a' thegither, it passes my judgment."

"Truly, Miss Griselda," replied the divine, "Monkbarns was inconsiderate. He should have ta'en a day to see the invitation, as they do wi' the titular's condescendence in the process of valuation and sale.—But the great man could not have come on a sudden to ony house in this parish where he could have been better served with *rivers*—that I must say—and also that the steam from the kitchen is very gratifying to my nostrils—and if ye have ony household affairs to attend to, Mrs Griselda, never make a stranger of me—I can amuse myself very weel with the larger copy of Erskine's Institutes."

And taking down from the window seat that amusing folio, (the Scottish Coke upon Littleton,) he opened it, as if instinctively, at the tenth title of Book Second, "of Teinds, or Tythes," and was presently deeply wrapped up in an abstruse discussion concerning the temporality of benefices.

The entertainment, about which Miss Oldbuck expressed so much anxiety, was at length placed upon the table; and the Earl of Glenallan, for the first time since the date of his calamity, sat at a stranger's board surrounded by strangers. He

seemed to himself like a man in a dream, or one whose brain was not fully recovered from the effects of an intoxicating poison. Relieved, as he had that morning been, from the image of guilt which had so long haunted his imagination, he felt his sorrows as a lighter and more tolerable load, but was still unable to take any share in the conversation that passed around him. It was, indeed, of a cast very different from that which he had been accustomed to. The bluntness of Oldbuck, the tiresome apologetic harangues of his sister, the pcdantry of the divine, and the vivacity of the young soldier, which savoured much more of the camp than of the court, were all new to a nobleman who had lived in a retired and melancholy state for so many years, that the manners of the world seemed to him equally strange and unpleasing. Miss M'Intyre alone, from the natural politeness and unpretending simplicity of her manners, appeared to belong to that class of society to which he had been accustomed in his earlier and better days.

Nor did Lord Glenallan's deportment less surprise the company. Though a plain but excellent family-dinner was provided, (for, as Mr Blattergowl had just said, it was impossible to surprise Miss Griselda when her larder was empty,) and though the Antiquary boasted his best port, and assimilated it to the Falernian of Horace, Lord Glenallan was proof to the allurements of both.

His servant placed before him a small mess of vegetables, that very dish, the cooking of which had alarmed Miss Griselda, arranged with the most minute and scrupulous neatness. He eat sparingly of these provisions; and a glass of pure water, sparkling from the fountain head, completed his repast. Such, his servant said, had been his lordship's diet for very many years, unless upon the high festivals of the Church, or when company of the first rank were entertained at Glenallan-house, when he relaxed a little in the austerity of his diet, and permitted himself a glass or two of wine. But at Monkbarns, no anchoret could make a more simple and scanty meal.

The Antiquary was a gentleman, as we have seen, in feeling, but blunt and careless in expression, from the habit of living with those before whom he had nothing to suppress. He attacked his noble guest without scruple on the severity of his regimen.

“A few half-cold greens and potatoes—a glass of ice-cold water to wash them down—antiquity gives no warrant for it, my lord. This house used to be accounted a *hospitium*, a place of retreat for Christians; but your lordship's diet is that of a heathen Pythagorean, or Indian Bramin—nay, more severe than either, if you refuse these fine apples.”

“I am a Catholic, you are aware,” said Lord

Glenallan, wishing to escape from the discussion, "and yeu know that our church'——

"Lays down many rules of mortification, but I never heard that they were quite so rigorously practised—Bear witness my predecessor, John of the Girnell, or the jolly Abbot, who gave his name to this apple, my lord."

And as he pared the fruit, in spite of his sister's "O fie, Monkbarns," and the prolonged cough of the minister, accompanied by a shake of his huge wig, the Antiquary proceeded to detail the intrigue which had given rise to the fame of the abbot's apple with more slyness and circumstantiality than was at all necessary. His jest (as may readily be conceived) missed fire, for this anecdote of conventual gallantry failed to produce the slightest smile on the visage of the Earl. Oldbuck then took up the subject of Ossian, Macpherson, and Mac-Cribb; but Lord Glenallan had never so much as heard of any of the three, so little conversant had he been with modern literature. The conversation was now in some danger of flagging, or of falling into the hands of Mr Blattergowl, who had just pronounced the formidable word, "tiend-free," when the subject of the French Revolution was started; a political event on which Lord Glenallan looked with all the prejudiced horror of a bigotted Catholic and zealous

aristocrat. Oldbuck was far from carrying his detestation of its principles so far.

“ There were many men in the first constituent assembly,” he said, “ who held sound whiggish doctrines, and were for settling the constitution with a proper provision for the liberties of the people. And if a set of furious madmen were now in possession of the government, it was what often happened in great revolutions, where extreme measures are adopted in the fury of the moment, and the state resembles an agitated pendulum which swings from side to side for some time ere it can acquire its due and perpendicular station. Or it might be likened to a storm or hurricane, which, passing over a region, does great damage in its passage, yet sweeps away stagnant and unwholesome vapours, and repays, in future health and fertility, its immediate desolation and ravage.”

The Earl shook his head : but having neither spirit nor inclination for debate, he suffered the argument to pass uncontested.

This discussion served to introduce the young soldier's experiences ; and he spoke of the actions in which he had been engaged with modesty, and, at the same time, with an air of spirit and zeal which delighted the Earl, who had been bred up, like others of his house, in the opinion, that the trade of arms was the first duty of man, and be-

lieved that to employ them against the French was a sort of holy warfare.

“What would I give,” said he apart to Oldbuck, as they rose to join the ladies in the drawing-room, “what would I give to have a son of such spirit as that young gentleman!—He wants something of address and manner, something of polish, which mixing in good society would soon give him—but with what zeal and animation he expresses himself—how fond of his profession—how loud in the praise of others—how modest when speaking of himself!”

“Hector is much obliged to you, my lord; I believe in my heart nobody ever spoke half so much good of him before, except perhaps the serjeant of his company, when he was wheedling a Highland recruit to enlist with him. He is a good lad notwithstanding, although he be not quite the hero your lordship supposes him, and although my commendations rather attend the kindness, than the vivacity of his character. I can assure you, his high spirit is a sort of constitutional vehemence, which attends him in every thing he sets about, and is often very inconvenient to his friends. I saw him to-day engage in an animated contest with a *phoca*, or seal, (*sealgh*, our people more properly call them, retaining the Gothic guttural *gh*.) with as much vehemence as if he had fought against Dumourier—Marry, my lord, the

phoca had the better, as the said Dumourier had of some other folks. And he'll talk with equal if not superior rapture of the good behaviour of a pointer bitch, as of the plan of a campaign."

"He shall have full permission to sport over my grounds," said the Earl, "if he is so fond of that exercise."

"You will bind him to you, my lord, body and soul; give him leave to crack off his birding-piece at a poor covey of partridges or moor-fowl, and he's yours for ever. I will enchant him by the intelligence. But O, my lord, that you could have seen my phoenix Lovel!—the very prince and chieftain of the youth of this age; and not destitute of spirit neither—I promise you he gave my termagant kinsman a *quid pro quo*—a Rowland for his Oliver, as the vulgar say, alluding to the two celebrated Paladins of Charlemagne."

After coffee, Lord Glenallan requested a private interview with the Antiquary, and was ushered to his library.

"I must withdraw you from your own amiable family," he said, "to involve you in the perplexities of an unhappy man. You are acquainted with the world, from which I have long been banished; for Glenallan-house has been to me rather a prison than a dwelling, although a prison which I had neither fortitude nor spirit to break from."

“ Let me first ask your lordship, what are your own wishes and designs in this matter ?”

“ I wish most especially to declare my unhappy marriage, and to vindicate the reputation of the unhappy Eveline ; that is, if you see a possibility of doing so without making public the conduct of my mother.”

“ *Suum cuique tribuito,*” said the Antiquary, “ do right to every one. The memory of that unhappy young lady has too long suffered, and I think it might be cleared without further impeaching that of your mother, than by letting it be understood in general that she greatly disapproved and bitterly opposed the match. All—forgive me, my lord—all who ever heard of the late Countess of Glenallan, will learn that without much surprise.”

“ But you forget one horrible circumstance, Mr Oldbuck.”

“ I am not aware of it.”

“ The fate of the infant—its disappearance with the confidential attendant of my mother, and the dreadful surmises which may be drawn from my conversation with Elspeth.”

“ If you would have my free opinion, my lord, and will not catch too rapidly at it as matter of hope, I would say, that it is very possible the child yet lives. For thus much I ascertained, by my former enquiries concerning the event of that de-

plorable evening, that a child and woman were carried that night from the cottage at the Craighburnfoot in a carriage and four by your brother Edward Geraldin Neville, whose journey towards England with these companions I traced for several stages. I believed then it was a part of the family compact to carry a child whom you meant to stigmatize with illegitimacy, out of that country, where chance might have raised protectors and proofs of its rights. But I now think that your brother, having reason, like yourself, to believe the child stained with shame yet more indelible, had nevertheless withdrawn it, partly from regard to the honour of his house, partly from the risk to which it might have been exposed in the neighbourhood of the Lady Glenallan."

As he spoke, the Earl of Glenallan grew extremely pale, and had nearly fallen from his chair. The alarmed Antiquary ran hither and thither looking for remedies: but his museum, though sufficiently well filled with a vast variety of useless matters, contained nothing that could be serviceable on that or any other occasion. As he posted out of the room to borrow his sister's salts, he could not help giving a constitutional growl of chagrin and wonder at the various incidents which had converted his mansion, first into an hospital for a wounded duellist, and now into the sick chamber of a dying nobleman. "And yet," said he, "I

have always kept aloof from the soldiery and the peerage. My *cænobitium* has only next to be made a lying-in hospital, and then, I trow, the transformation will be complete."

When he returned with the remedy, Lord Glenallan was much better. The new and unexpected light which Mr Oldbuck had thrown upon the melancholy history of his family had almost overpowered him. "You think then, Mr Oldbuck,—for you are capable of thinking, which I am not,—you think, then, that it is possible—that is, not impossible—my child may yet live?"

"I think," said the Antiquary, "it is impossible that it could come to any violent harm through your brother's means. He was known to be a gay and dissipated man, but not cruel nor dishonourable,—nor is it possible, that, if he had intended any foul play, he would have placed himself so forward in the charge of the infant, as I will prove to your lordship he did."

So saying, Mr Oldbuck opened a drawer of the cabinet of his ancestor, Aldobrand, and produced a bundle of papers tied with a black ribband, and labelled, Examinations, &c. taken by Jonathan Oldbuck, J. P. upon the 18th of February, 17—; a little under was written, in a small hand, *Eheu Evelina!* The tears dropped fast from the Earl's eyes, as he endeavoured, in vain, to unfasten the knot which secured these documents.

“ Your lordship,” said Mr Oldbuck, “ had better not read these at present—agitated as you are, and having much business before you, you must not exhaust your strength. Your brother’s succession is now, I presume, your own, and it will be easy for you to make enquiry among his servants and retainers, so as to hear where the child is, if, fortunately, it shall be still alive.”

“ I dare hardly hope it,—why should my brother have been silent to me ?”

“ Nay, my lord ! why should he have communicated to your lordship the existence of a being, whom you must have supposed the offspring of”—

“ Most true—there is an obvious and a kind reason for his being silent. If any thing, indeed, could have added to the horror of the ghastly dream that has poisoned my whole existence, it must have been the knowledge that such a child of misery existed.”

“ Then—although it would be rash to conclude, at the distance of more than twenty years, that your son must needs be still alive, because he was not destroyed in infancy, I own I think you should instantly set on foot enquiries.”

“ It shall be done,” replied Lord Glenallan ; “ I will write to a faithful steward of my father, who acted in the same capacity under my brother Neville—but, Mr Oldbuck, I am not my brother’s heir.”

“ Indeed !—I am sorry for that, my lord—it is a noble estate, and the ruins of the old castle of Neville’s-Burgh alone, which are the most superb reliques of Anglo-Norman architecture in that part of the country, are a possession much to be coveted. I thought your father had no other son or near relative.”

“ He had not, Mr Oldbuck,” replied Lord Glenallan ; “ but my brother adopted views in politics, and a form of religion, alien from those which had been always held by our house. Our tempers had long differed, nor did my unhappy mother always think him sufficiently observant to her. In short, there was a family quarrel, and my brother, whose property was at his own free disposal, availed himself of the power vested in him to choose a stranger for his heir. It is a matter which never struck me as being of the least consequence ; for, if worldly possessions could alleviate misery, I have enough and to spare. But now I shall regret it, if it throws any difficulty in the way of our enquiries—and I bethink me that it may ; for, in case of my having a lawful son of my body, and my brother dying without issue, my father’s possessions stood entailed upon my son. It is not, therefore, likely that this heir, be who he may, will afford us assistance in making a discovery which may turn out so much to his own prejudice.”

“ And in all probability the steward your lordship mentions is also in his service.”

“ It is most likely ; and the man being a Protestant—how far it is safe to entrust him?—

“ I should hope, my lord, that a Protestant may be as trustworthy as a Catholic. I am doubly interested in the Protestant faith, my lord. My ancestor, Aldobrand Oldenbuck, printed the celebrated Confession of Augsburg, as I can shew by the original edition now in this house.”

“ I have not the least doubt, Mr Oldbuck, nor do I speak out of bigotry or intolerance ; but probably the Protestant steward will favour the Protestant heir rather than the Catholic—if, indeed, my son has been bred in his father’s faith—or, alas ! if indeed he yet lives.”

“ We must look close into this,” said Oldbuck, “ before committing ourselves. I have a literary friend at York, with whom I have long corresponded on the subject of the Saxon horn that is preserved in the Minster there ; we interchanged letters for six years, and have only as yet been able to settle the first line of the inscription. I will write forthwith to this gentleman, Dr Dryasdust, and be particular in my enquiries concerning the character, &c. of your brother’s heir, and what else may be likely to further your lordship’s enquiries. In the meantime your lordship will collect the

evidence of the marriage, which I hope can still be recovered.”

“ Unquestionably—the witnesses who were formerly withdrawn from your research are still living. My tutor, who solemnized the marriage, was provided for by a living in France, and has lately returned to this country as an emigrant, a victim of his zeal for loyalty, legitimacy, and religion.”

“ That’s one lucky consequence of the French Revolution, my lord—you must allow that at least—but no offence, I will act as warmly in your affairs as if I were of your own faith in politics and religion. And take my advice—If you want an affair of consequence properly managed, put it into the hands of an antiquary ; for, as they are eternally exercising their genius and research upon trifles, it is impossible they can be baffled in affairs of importance—use makes perfect ; and the corps that is most frequently drilled upon the parade will be most prompt in its exercise upon the day of battle. And, talking upon that subject, I would willingly read to your lordship, in order to pass away the time betwixt and supper”——

“ I beg I may not interfere with family arrangements,” said Lord Glenallan, “ but I never taste any thing after sun-set.”

“ Nor I neither, my lord, notwithstanding it is said to have been the custom of the ancients—

but then I dine differently from your lordship, and therefore am better enabled to dispense with those elaborate entertainments which my woman-kind (that is, my sister and niece, my lord,) are apt to place on the table, for the display rather of their own housewifery than the accommodation of our wants. However, a broiled bone, or a smoked haddock, or an oyster, or a slice of bacon of our own curing, with a toast and a tankard—or something or other of that sort, to close the orifice of the stomach before going to bed, does not fall under my restriction, nor, I hope, under your lordship's."

"My no-supper is literal, Mr Oldbuck ; but I will attend you at your meal with pleasure."

"Well, my lord, I will endeavour to entertain your ears at least, since I cannot banquet your palate. What I am about to read to your lordship relates to the upland glens."

Lord Glenallan, though he would rather have recurred to the subject of his own uncertainties, was compelled to make a sign of rueful civility and acquiescence.

The Antiquary, therefore, took out his portfolio of loose sheets, and, after premising that the topographical details here laid down were designed to illustrate a slight essay upon castrametation, which had been read with indulgence at several societies of Antiquaries, he commenced as follows :

“ The subject, my lord, is the hill-fort of Quickens-bog, with the site of which your lordship is doubtless familiar : It is upon your store-farm of Mantanner, in the barony of Clochnaben.”

“ I think I have heard the names of these places,” said the Earl, in answer to the Antiquary’s appeal.

“ Heard the name? and the farm brings him six hundred a year—O Lord !”

Such was the scarce subdued ejaculation of the Antiquary. But his hospitality got the better of his surprise, and he proceeded to read his essay with an audible voice, in great glee at having secured a patient, and, as he fondly hoped, an interested hearer.

“ Quickens-bog may at first seem to derive its name from the plant *Quicken*, by which, *Scotticé*, we understand couch-grass, dog-grass, or the *Triticum repens* of Linnæus, and the common English monosyllable *Bog*, by which we mean, in popular language, a marsh or morass ; in Latin, *Palus*. But it may confound the rash adopters of the more obvious etymological derivations, to learn, that the couch-grass or dog-grass, or, to speak scientifically, the *Triticum repens* of Linnæus, does not grow within a quarter of a mile of this castrum or hill-fort, whose ramparts are uniformly clothed with short verdant turf ; and that we must seek a bog or *palus* at a still greater distance, the

nearest being that of Gird-the-mear, a full half-mile distant. The last syllable, *bog*, is obviously, therefore, a mere corruption of the Saxon *Burgh*, which we find in the various transmutations of *Burgh*, *Burrow*, *Brough*, *Bruff*, *Buff*, and *Boff*, which last approaches very near the sound in question—since, supposing the word to have been originally *borgh*, which is the genuine Saxon spelling, a slight change, such as modern organs too often make upon ancient sounds, will produce first *Bogh*, and then *elisa H*, or, compromising and sinking the guttural, agreeable to the common practice, you have either *Boff* or *Bog* as it happens. The word *Quickens* requires in like manner to be altered,—decomposed as it were,—and reduced to its original and genuine sound ere we can discern its real meaning. By the ordinary exchange of the *Qu* into *Wh*, familiar to the rudest *tyro* who has opened a book of old Scottish poetry, we gain either *Whilkens*, or *Whiehens-borgh*—put, we may suppose, by way of question, as if those who imposed the name, struck with the extreme antiquity of the place, had expressed in it an interrogation, “To whom did this fortress belong?”—Or, it might be *Whackens-burgh*, from the Saxon *Whacken*, to strike with the hand, as doubtless the skirmishes near a place of such apparent consequence must have legitimated such a derivation,” &c. &c. &c.

I will be more merciful to my readers than Oldbuck was to his guest ; for, considering his opportunities of gaining patient attention from a person of such consequence as Lord Glenallan were not many, he used, or rather abused, the present to the uttermost.

CHAPTER VII.

Crabbed age and youth
Cannot live together :—
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care ;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather,
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.

SHAKSPEARE.

IN the morning of the following day, the Antiquary, who was something of a sluggard, was summoned from his bed a full hour earlier than his custom by Caxon.

“ What’s the matter now ?” he exclaimed, yawning and stretching forth his hand to the huge gold repeater, which, bedded upon his India silk handkerchief, was laid safe by his pillow—“ What’s the matter now, Caxon ?—it can’t be eight o’clock yet.”

“ Na, sir,—but my lord’s man sought me out, for he fancies me your honour’s valley-de-sham,—and sae I am, there’s nae doubt o’t, baith your honour’s and the minister’s—at least ye hae nae

other that I ken o'—and I gie a help to Sir Arthur too, but that's mair in the way o' my profession."

" Well, well—never mind that—happy is he that is his own valley-de-sham, as you call it—but why disturb my morning's rest?"

" Ou, sir, the great man's been up since peep o' day, and he's steered the town to get awa' an express to fetch his carriage, and it will be here briefly, and he wad like to see your honour afore he gaes awa'."

" Gadso! these great men use one's house and their time as if it were their own property. Well, it's once and away.—Has Jenny come to her senses yet, Caxon?"

" Troth, sir, but just middling—she's been in a swither about the jocolate this morning, and was like to hae toomed it a' out into the slap-bason, and drank it hersel in her ecstacies—but she's won ower wi't, wi' the help o' Miss M'Intyre."

" Then all my womankind are on foot and scrambling, and I must be in my quiet bed no longer, if I would have a well-regulated house—Lend me my gown.—And what are the news at Fairport?"

" Ou, sir, what can they be about but this grand news o' my lord—that hasna been, ower the door-stane, they threep to me, for this twenty

years—this grand news of his coming to visit your honour !”

“ Aha !” said Monkbarns, “ and what do they say of that, Caxon ?”

“ Deed, sir, they hae various opinions. Thae fallows that are the democraws, as they ca’ them, that are again’ the king and the law and dressing o’ gentlemen’s hair—a wheen blackguards—they say he’s come down to speak wi’ your honour about bringing down his hill-lads and Highland tenant-ry to break up the meetings of the Friends o’ the People—and when I said your honour never meddled wi’ the like o’ sic things where there was like to be straiks and bloodshed, they said, if ye didna, your nevoy did, and that he was weel kenn’d to be a kingsman that wad fight knee-deep, and that ye were the head and he was the hand, and that the Yerl was to bring out the men and the siller.”

“ Come, I am glad the war is to cost me nothing but counsel.”

“ Na, na, naebody thinks your honour wad either fight yoursel, or gie ony feck o’ siller to ony side o’ the question.”

“ Umph ! well, that’s the opinion of the democraws, as you call them—What say the rest of Fairport ?”

“ In troth,” said the candid reporter, “ I canna say it’s muckle better—Captain Coquet, of the vo-

lunteers,—that's him that's to be the new collector,—and some of the other gentlemen of the Blue and a' Blue Club, are just saying it's no right to let papists, that hae sae mony French friends as the Yerl of Glenallan, gang through the country, and—but your honour will maybe be angry?"

"Not I, Caxon,—fire away as if you were Captain Coquet's whole platoon,—I can stand it."

"Weel, then, they say, sir, that as ye didna encourage the petition about the peace, and wadna petition in favour of the new tax, and as ye were again' bringing in the yemanry at the meal mob, but just for settling the folk wi' the constables—they say ye're no a gude friend to government; and that thae sort o' meetings between sic a powerful man as the Yerl, and sic a wise man as you,—odd. they think they suld be lookit after, and some say ye should baith be shankit aff till Edinburgh castle."

"On my word," said the Antiquary, "I am infinitely obliged to my neighbours for their good opinion of me! And so, I, that have never interfered with their bickerings, but to recommend quiet and moderate measures, am given up on both sides as a man very likely to commit high treason, either against King or People?—Give me my coat, Caxon,—give me my coat—It's lucky I live not in their report.—Have you heard any thing of Taffril and his vessel?"

Caxon's countenance fell.—“ Na, sir, and the winds hae been high, and this is a fearfu' coast to cruise on in thae eastern gales,—the headlands rin sac far out, that a veshell's embayed afore I could sharp a razor ; and then there's nae harbour or city of refuge on our coast, a' craigs and breakers. A veshell that rins ashore wi' us flees asunder like the powther when I shake the pluff—and it's as ill to gather ony o't again.—I aye tell my daughter thae things when she grows wearied for a letter frae Lieutenant Taffril—It's aye an apology for him—Ye suldna blame him, says I, hinnie, for ye little ken what may hae happened.”

“ Ay, ay, Caxon, thou art as good a comforter as a valet-de-chambre.—Give me a white stock, man,—d'ye think I can go down with a handkerchief about my neck when I have company ?”

“ Dear sir, the Captain says a three-nookit handkercher is the maist fashionable overlay, and that stocks belang to your honour and me, that are auld-wa'ld folk.—I beg pardon for mentioning us twa thegither, but it was what he said.”

“ The Captain's a puppy, and you are a goose, Caxon.”

“ It's very like it may be sac,—I am sure your honour kens best.”

Before breakfast, Lord Glenallan, who appeared in better spirits than he had evinced in the former evening, went particularly through the various cir-

cumstances of evidence which the exertions of Oldbuck had formerly collected ; and pointing out the means which he possessed of completing the proof of his marriage, expressed his resolution instantly to go through the painful task of collecting and restoring the evidence concerning the birth of Eveline Neville, which Elspeth had stated to be in his mother's possession.

“ And yet, Mr Oldbuck,” he said, “ I feel like a man who receives important tidings ere he is yet fully awake, and doubt whether they refer to actual life, or are not rather a continuation of his dream.—This woman,—this Elspeth,—she is in the extremity of age, and approaching in many respects to dotage.—Have I not,—it is a hideous question,—have I not been hasty in the admission of her present evidence, against that which she formerly gave me to a very—very different purpose ?”

Mr Oldbuck paused a moment, and then answered with firmness—“ No, my lord, I cannot think you have any reason to suspect the truth of what she has told you last, from no apparent impulse but the urgency of conscience. Her confession was voluntary, disinterested, distinct, consistent with itself and with all the other known circumstances of the case. I would lose no time, however, in examining and arranging the other documents to which she has referred, and I also think her own statement should be taken down, if possi-

ble, in a formal manner. We thought of setting about this together. But it will be a relief to your lordship, and, moreover, have a more impartial appearance, were I to attempt the investigation alone, in the capacity of a magistrate. I will do this, at least I will attempt it, so soon as I shall see her in a favourable state of mind to undergo an examination."

Lord Glenallan wrung his hands in token of grateful acquiescence. "I cannot express to you," he said, "Mr Oldbuck, how much your countenance and co-operation in this dark and most melancholy business gives me relief and confidence. I cannot enough applaud myself for yielding to the sudden impulse which impelled me, as it were, to drag you into my confidence, and which arose from the experience I had formerly of your firmness, in discharge of your duty as a magistrate, and as a friend to the memory of the unfortunate. Whatever the issue of these matters may prove,—and I would fain hope there is a dawn breaking on the fortunes of my house, though I shall not live to enjoy its light,—but whatsoever be the issue, you have laid my family and me under the most lasting obligation."

"My lord," answered the Antiquary, "I must necessarily have the greatest respect for your lordship's family, which I am well aware is one of the most ancient in Scotland, being certainly derived from Aymer de Geraldin, who sat in parliament at

Perth, in the reign of Alexander II., and who, by the less vouched, yet plausible tradition of the country, is said to have been descended from the Marmor of Clochnaben.—But, with all my veneration for your ancient descent, I must acknowledge that I find myself still more bound to give your lordship what assistance is in my limited power, from sincere sympathy with your sorrows, and detestation at the frauds which have so long been practised upon you.—But, my lord, the matin meal is, I see, now prepared—Permit me to shew your lordship the way through the intricacies of my *cænobitium*, which is rather a combination of cells, justled oddly together, and piled one upon the top of the other, than a regular house.—I trust you will make yourself some amends for the spare diet of yesterday.”

But this was no part of Lord Glenallan’s system : having saluted the company with the grave and melancholy politeness which distinguished his manners, his servant placed before him a slice of toasted bread, with a glass of fair water, being the fare upon which he usually broke his fast. While the morning’s meal of the young soldier and the old Antiquary was dispatched in a much more substantial manner, the noise of wheels was heard.

“ Your lordship’s carriage, I believe,” said Oldbuck, stepping to the window. “ On my word, a handsome *Quadrige*, for such, according to the

best *scholium*, was the *vox signata* of the Romans of a chariot which, like that of your lordship, was drawn by four horses."

"And I will venture to say," cried Hector, eagerly gazing from the window, "that four handsomer or better-matched bays never were put in harness.—What fine fore-hands!—what capital chargers they would make!—Might I ask if they are of your lordship's own breeding?"

"I—I—rather believe so," said Lord Glenallan; "but I have been so negligent of my domestic matters, that I am ashamed to say I must apply to Calvert," (looking at the domestic.)

"They are of your lordship's own breeding," said Calvert, "got by Mad Tom out of Jemima and Yarico, your lordship's brood mares."

"Are there more of the set?" said Lord Glenallan.

"Two, my lord,—one rising four, the other five off this grass, both very handsome."

"Then let Dawkins bring them down to Monkbarns to-morrow—I hope Captain M'Intyre will accept them, if they are at all fit for service."

Captain M'Intyre's eyes sparkled, and he was profuse in grateful acknowledgments; while Oldbuck, on the other hand, seizing the Earl's sleeve, endeavoured to intercept a present which boded no good to his corn-chest and hay-loft.

"My lord—my lord—much obliged—much

obliged—but Hector is a pedestrian, and never mounts on horseback in battle—he is a Highland soldier, moreover, and his dress ill adapted for cavalry service. Even Macpherson never mounted his ancestors on horseback, though he has the impudence to talk of their being car-borne—and that, my lord, is what is running in Hector's head—it is the vehicular, not the equestrian exercise which he envies—

‘ Sant quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum
Collegisse juvat.’

His noddle is running on a curriele, which he has neither money to buy, nor skill to drive if he had it ; and I assure your lordship, that the possession of two such quadrupeds would prove a greater scrape than any of his duels, whether with human foe or with my friend the *phoca*.”

“ You must command us all at present, Mr Oldbuck,” said the Earl politely, “ but I trust you will not ultimately prevent my gratifying my young friend in some way that may afford him pleasure ?”

“ Any thing useful, my lord, but no *curriculum*—I protest he might as rationally propose to keep a *quadriga* at once—And now I think of it, what is that old post-chaise from Fairport come jingling here for ?—I did not send for it.”

“ *I* did, sir,” said Hector rather sulkily, for he was not much gratified by his uncle’s interference to prevent the Earl’s intended generosity, nor particularly inclined to relish either the disparagement which he cast upon his skill as a charioteer, or the mortifying allusion to his bad success in the adventures of the duel and the seal.

“ You did, sir ?” echoed the Antiquary, in answer to his concise information. “ And pray, what may be your business with a post-chaise ?—Is this splendid equipage—this *biga*, as I may call it—to serve for an introduction to a *quadriga* or a *curriculum* ?”

“ Really, sir, if it be necessary to give you such a specific explanation, I am going to Fairport on a little business.”

“ Will you permit me to enquire into the nature of that business, Hector ?—I should suppose any regimental affairs might be transacted by your worthy deputy the serjeant,—an honest gentleman, who is so good as to make Monkbarns his home since his arrival among us—I should, I say, suppose that he may transact any business of yours, without your spending a day’s pay on two dog-horses, and such a combination of rotten wood, cracked glass, and leather—such a skeleton of a post-chaise, as that before the door.”

“ It is not regimental business, sir, that calls

me ; and, since you insist upon knowing, I must inform you, Caxon has brought word this morning that old Ochiltree, the beggar, is to be brought up for examination to-day, previous to his being committed for trial ; and I am going to see that the poor old fellow gets fair play—that's all."

" Ay ?—I heard something of this, but could not think it serious. And pray, Captain Hector, who are so ready to be every man's second on all occasions of strife, civil or military, by land, by water, or on the sea-beach, what is your especial concern with old Edie Ochiltree ?"

" He was a soldier in my father's company, sir ; and besides, when I was about to do a very foolish thing one day, he interfered to prevent me, and gave me almost as much good advice, sir, as you could have done yourself."

" And with the same good effect, I dare be sworn for it—Eh, Hector ?—Come, confess it was thrown away."

" Indeed it was, sir ; but I see no reason that my folly should make me less grateful for his intended kindness."

" Bravo, Hector ! that's the most sensible thing I ever heard you say—but always tell me your plans without reserve—why, I will go with you myself, man—I am sure the old fellow is not guilty, and I will assist him in such a scrape much more

effectually than you can do. Besides, it will save thee half-a-guinea, my lad, a consideration which I heartily pray you to have more frequently before your eyes."

Lord Glenallan's politeness had induced him to turn away and talk with the ladies, when the dispute between the uncle and nephew appeared to grow rather too animated to be fit for the ear of a stranger, but the Earl mingled again in the conversation when the placable tone of the Antiquary expressed amity. Having received a brief account of the mendicant, and of the accusation brought against him, which Oldbuck did not hesitate to ascribe to the malice of Dousterswivel, Lord Glenallan asked, whether the individual in question had not been a soldier formerly?—He was answered in the affirmative.

"Had he not," continued his lordship, "a coarse blue coat, or gown, with a badge?—Was he not a tall, striking-looking old man, with grey beard and hair, who kept his body remarkably erect, and talked with an air of ease and independence, which formed a strong contrast to his profession?"

"All this is an exact picture of the man," returned Oldbuck.

"Why, then," continued Lord Glenallan, "although I fear I can be of no use to him in his present condition, yet I owe him a debt of grati-

tude for being the first person who brought me some tidings of the utmost importance. I would willingly offer him a place of comfortable retirement, when he is extricated from his present situation."

"I fear, my lord," said Oldbuck, "he would have difficulty in reconciling his vagrant habits to the acceptance of your bounty, at least I know the experiment has been tried without effect. To beg from the public at large he considers as independence, in comparison to drawing his whole support from the bounty of an individual. He is so far a true philosopher, as to be a contemner of all ordinary rules of hours and times. When he is hungry he eats; when thirsty he drinks; when weary he sleeps; and with such indifference with respect to the means and appliances about which we make a fuss, that, I suppose, he was never ill dined or ill lodged in his life. Then he is, to a certain extent, the oracle of the district through which he travels—their genealogist, their newsman, their master of the revels, their doctor at a pinch, or their divine—I promise you he has too many duties, and is too zealous in performing them, to be easily bribed to abandon his calling. But I should be truly sorry if they sent the poor light-hearted old man to lie for weeks in a jail. I am convinced the confinement would break his heart."

Thus finished the conference. Lord Glenallan having taken leave of the ladies, renewed his offer to Captain M'Intyre of the freedom of his manors for sport, which was joyously accepted.

"I can only add," he said, "that if your spirits are not liable to be damped by dull company, Glenallan-house is at all times open to you—On two days of the week, Friday and Saturday, I keep my apartment, which will be rather a relief to you, as you will be left to enjoy the society of my almoner, Mr Gladsmoor, who is a scholar and a man of the world."

Hector, his heart exulting at the thoughts of ranging through the preserve of Glenallan-house, and over the well-protected moors of Clochnaben, made many acknowledgments of the honour and gratitude he felt. Mr Oldbuck was sensible of the Earl's attention to his nephew; Miss M'Intyre was pleased because her brother was gratified; and Miss Griselda Oldbuck looked forward with glee to the potting of whole bags of moor-fowl and black game, of which Mr Blattergowl was a professed admirer. Thus,—which is always the case when a man of rank leaves a private family where he has studied to appear obliging,—all were ready to open in praise of the Earl as soon as he had taken his leave, and was wheeled off in his chariot by the four admired bays. But the panegyric was cut

short, for Oldbuck and his nephew deposited themselves in the Fairport hack, which, with one horse trotting, and the other urged to a canter, creaked, jingled, and hobbled towards that celebrated seaport, in a manner that formed a strong contrast to the smoothness with which Lord Glenallan's equipage had seemed to vanish from their eyes.

CHAPTER VIII.

Yes! I love justice well—as well as you do—
But, since the good dame's blind, she shall excuse me,
If, time and reason fitting, I prove dumb;—
The breath I utter now shall be no means
To take away from me my breath in future.

Old Play.

By dint of charity from the town's people, in aid of the load of provisions he had brought with him into durance, Edie Ochiltree had passed a day or two's confinement without much impatience, regretting his want of freedom the less, as the weather proved to be broken and rainy.

“The prison,” he said, “wasna sae dooms bad a place as it was ca'd. Ye had aye a good roof ower your head to fend aff the weather, and, if the windows werena glazed, it was the mair airy and pleasant for the summer season. And there were folk enow to crack wi', and he had bread eneugh to eat, and what need he fash himsel about the rest o't?”

The courage of our philosophical mendicant began, however, to abate, when the sun-beams shone

fair on the rusty bars of his grated dungeon, and a miserable linnet, whose cage some poor debtor had obtained permission to attach to the window, began to greet them with his whistle.

“Ye’re in better spirits than I am,” said Edie, addressing the bird, “for I can neither whistle nor sing for thinking o’ the bonny burnsides and green shaws that I should hae been dandering beside in weather like this.—But hae, there’s some crumbs t’ye, an ye are sae merry; and troth ye hae some reason to sing an ye kent it, for your cage comes by nae faut o’ your ain, and I may thank mysel that I am closed up in this weary place.”

Ochiltree’s soliloquy was disturbed by a peace-officer, who came to summon him to attend the magistrate. So he set forth in awful procession between two poor creatures, neither of them so stout as he was himself, to be conducted into the presence of inquisitorial justice. The people, as the aged prisoner was led along by his decrepit guards, exclaimed to each other, “Eh! see sic a grey-haired man as that is, to have committed a highway robbery, wi’ ae fit in the grave!”—And the children congratulated the officers, objects of their alternate dread and sport, Puggie Orrock and Jock Ormston, on having a prisoner as old as themselves.

Thus marshalled forward, Edie was presented (by no means for the first time) before the wor-

shipful Baillie Littlejohn, who, contrary to what his name expressed, was a tall portly magistrate, on whom corporation crusts had not been conferred in vain. He was a zealous loyalist of that zealous time, somewhat rigorous and peremptory in the execution of his duty, and a good deal inflated with the sense of his own power and importance, otherwise an honest, well-meaning, and useful citizen.

“Bring him in, bring him in!” he exclaimed; “upon my word these are awful and unnatural times—the very beadsmen and retainers of his majesty are the first to break his laws—Here has been an old blue-gown committing robbery! I suppose the next will reward the royal charity, which supplies him with his garb, pension, and begging license, by engaging in high-treason, or sedition at least—But bring him in.”

Eddie made his obeisance, and then stood, as usual, firm and erect, with the side of his face turned a little upward, as if to catch every word which the magistrate might address to him. To the first general questions, which respected only his name and calling, the mendicant answered with readiness and accuracy; but when the magistrate, having caused his clerk to take down these particulars, began to enquire whereabout the mendicant was on the night when Dousterswivel met with his misfortune, Eddie demurred to the

motion. "Can ye tell me now, Baillic, you that understands the law, what gude will it do me to answer ony o' your questions?"

"Good? no good certainly, my friend, except that giving a true account of yourself, if you are innocent, may entitle me to set you at liberty."

"But it seems mair reasonable to me, now, that you, Baillic, or ony body that has ony thing to say against me, should prove my guilt, and no to be bidding me prove my innocence."

"I don't sit here," answered the magistrate, "to dispute points of law with you. I ask you, if you chuse to answer my question, whether you were at Ringan Aikwood the forester's, upon the day I have specified?"

"Really, sir, I dinna feel myself called on to remember."

"Or whether, in the course of that day or night, you saw Steven, or Steenie, Mucklebackit?—you knew him, I suppose?"

"O brawlie did I ken Steenie, puir fallow—but I canna condeshend on ony particular time I have seen him lately."

"Were you at the ruins of St Ruth any time in that evening?"

"Baillic Littlejohn," said the mendicant, "if it be your honour's pleasure, we'll cut a lang tale short, and I'll just tell ye, I am no minded to an-

swer ony o' thae questions—I'm ower auld a traveller to let my tongue bring me into trouble."

"Write down," said the magistrate, "that he declines to answer all interrogatories, in respect that by telling the truth he might be brought to trouble."

"Na, na," said Ochiltree, "I'll no hae that set down as ony part o' my answer—but I just meant to say, that in a' my memory and practice, I never saw ony gude come o' answering idle questions."

"Write down, that, being acquainted with judicial interrogatories by long practice, and having sustained injury by answering questions put to him on such occasions, the declarant refuses"——

"Na, na, Baillie," reiterated Edie, "ye are no to come in on me that gate neither."

"Dictate the answer yourself then, friend," said the magistrate, "and the clerk will take it down from your own mouth."

"Ay, ay," said Edie, "that's what I ca' fair play; I'se do that without loss o' time.—Sae, neighbour, ye may just write down, that Edie Ochiltree, the declarant, stands up for the liberty—na, I maunna say that neither—I am nae liberty-boy—I hae fought again' them in the riots in Dublin—besides, I have ate the king's bread mony a day.—Stay, let me see—Ay—write that Edie Ochiltree, the Blue-gown, stands up for the

prerogative—(see that ye spell that word right—it's a lang ane)—for the prerogative of the subjects of the land, and winna answer a single word that sall be asked at him this day, unless he sees a reason for't.—Put down that, young man."

"Then, Edie, since you will give me no information on the subject, I must send you *back* to prison till you shall be delivered in due course of law."

"Aweel, sir, if its Heaven's will and man's will, nae doubt I maun submit. I hae nae great objection to the prison, only that a body canna win out o't; and if it wad please you as weel, Baillie, I wad gie you my word to appear afore the Lords at the Circuit, or in any other court ye like, on any day ye are pleased to appoint."

"I rather think, my good friend, your word might be a slender security where your neck may be in some danger. I am apt to think you would suffer the pledge to be forfeited.—If you could give me sufficient security, indeed"——

At this moment the Antiquary and Captain M'Intyre entered the apartment.—"Good morning to you, gentlemen," said the magistrate; "you find me toiling in my usual vocation—looking after the iniquities of the people—labouring for the *res-publica*, Mr Oldbuck—serving the King our master, Captain M'Intyre,—for I suppose you know I have taken up the sword?"

“ It is one of the emblems of justice, doubtless,” answered the Antiquary ; “ but I should have thought the scales would have suited you better, Baillie, especially as you have them ready in the warehouse.”

“ Very good, Monkbarns—excellent ; but I do not take the sword up as justice, but as a soldier—indeed I should rather say the musquet and bayonet—there they stand at the elbow of my gouty chair, for I am scarce fit for the drill yet—A slight touch of our old acquaintance podagra—I can keep my feet, however, while our serjeant puts me through the manual. I should like to know, Captain M·Intyre, if he follows the regulations correctly—he brings us but awkwardly to the *present*.” And he hobbled towards his weapon to illustrate his doubts and display his proficiency.

“ I rejoice we have such zealous defenders, Baillie,” replied Mr Oldbuck ; “ and I dare say Hector will gratify you by communicating his opinion on your progress in his new calling. Why, you rival the Hecaté of the ancients, my good sir—a merchant on the Mart, a magistrate in the Town-house, a soldier on the Links—*quid non pro patria* ? But my business is with the justice ; so let commerce and war go slumber.”

“ Well, my good sir,” said the Baillie, “ and what commands have you for me ?”

“ Why, here’s an old acquaintance of mine, call-

ed Edie Ochiltree, whom some of your myrmidons have mewed up in jail, on account of an alleged assault on that fellow Dousterswivel, of whose accusation I do not believe one word."

The magistrate here assumed a very grave countenance. "You ought to have been informed that he is accused of robbery, as well as assault; a very serious matter indeed—it is not often such criminals come under my cognizance."

"And," replied Oldbuck, "you are tenacious of the opportunity of making the very most of such as occur. But is this poor old man's case really so very bad?"

"It is rather out of rule," said the Baillic; "but as you are in the commission, Monkbarns, I have no hesitation to shew you Dousterswivel's declaration, and the rest of the precognition." And he put the papers into the Antiquary's hands, who assumed his spectacles, and sate down in a corner to peruse them.

The officers in the mean time had directions to remove their prisoner into another apartment; but before they could do so, M'Intyre took an opportunity to greet old Edie, and to slip a guinea into his hand.

"Lord bless your honour," said the old man; "it's a young soldier's gift, and it should surely thrive wi' an auld anc. I'se no refuse it, though

it's beyond my rules ; for if they steek me up here, my friends are like enough to forget me—out o' sight out o' mind is a true proverb—And it wadna be creditable for me, that am the King's beadsman, and entitled to beg by word of mouth, to be fishing for bawbees out at the jail window wi' the fit o' a stocking and a string." As he made this observation he was conducted out of the apartment.

Mr Dousterswivel's declaration contained an exaggerated account of the violence he had sustained, and also of his loss.

" But what I should have liked to have asked him," said Monkbarns, " would have been his purpose in frequenting the ruins of St Ruth, so lonely a place, at such an hour, and with such a companion as Edie Ochiltree. There is no road lies that way, and I do not conceive a mere passion for the picturesque would carry the German thither in such a night of storm and wind. Depend upon it he has been about some roguery, and, in all probability, hath been caught in a trap of his own setting—*Nec lex justior ulla.*"—

The magistrate allowed there was something mysterious in that circumstance, and apologized for not pressing Dousterswivel, as his declaration was voluntarily emitted. But for the support of the main charge, he shewed the declaration of the Aikwoods concerning the state in which Dousterswivel

was found, and establishing the important fact, that the mendicant had left the barn in which he was quartered, and did not return to it again. Two people belonging to the Fairport undertaker, who had that night been employed in attending the funeral of Lady Glenallan, had also given declarations, that, being sent to pursue two suspicious persons who left the ruins of St Ruth as the funeral came, and who, it was supposed, might have been pillaging some of the ornaments prepared for the ceremony, they had lost and regained sight of them more than once, owing to the nature of the ground, which was unfavourable for riding, but had at length fairly lodged them both in Mucklebackit's cottage. And one of the men added, that " he, the declarant, having dismounted from his horse, and gone close up to the window of the hut, he saw the old Blue-gown and young Steenie Mucklebackit with others eating and drinking in the inside, and also observed the said Steenie Mucklebackit shew a pocket-book to the others ; and declarant has no doubt that Ochiltree and Steenie Mucklebackit were the persons whom he and his comrade had pursued, as above mentioned." And being interrogated why he did not enter the said cottage, declares " he had no warrant so to do ; and that as Mucklebackit and his family were understood to be rough-handed folk, he, the declarant, had no desire to meddle or make with their affairs. *Causa*

scientiæ patet. All which he declares to be truth," &c.

"What do you say to that body of evidence against your friend?" said the magistrate, when he had observed the Antiquary had turned the last leaf.

"Why, were it in the case of any other person, I own, I should say it looked, *prima facie*, a little ugly; but I cannot allow any body to be in the wrong for beating Dousterswivel—Had I been an hour younger, or had but one single flash of your warlike genius, Baillie, I should have done it myself long ago—He is *nebulo nebulonum*, an impudent, fraudulent, mendacious quack, that has cost me a hundred pounds by his roguery; and my neighbour Sir Arthur, God knows how much—And besides, Baillie, I do not hold him to be a sound friend to government."

"Indeed?" said Baillie Littlejohn; "if I thought that, it would alter the question considerably."

"Right; for, in beating him, the beadsman must have shewn his gratitude to the king by thumping his enemy; and in robbing him, he would only have plundered an Egyptian, whose wealth it is lawful to spoil. Now, suppose this interview in the ruins of St Ruth had relation to politics,—and this story of hidden treasure, and so forth, was a bribe from the other side of the water

for some great man, or the funds destined to maintain a seditious club?"

"My dear sir, you hit my very thoughts! How fortunate should I be if I could become the humble means of sifting such a matter to the bottom!—Don't you think we had better call out the volunteers, and put them on duty?"

"Not just yet, while podagra deprives them of an essential member of their body.—But will you let me examine Ochiltree?"

"Certainly; but you'll make nothing of him. He gave me distinctly to understand he knew the danger of a judicial declaration on the part of an accused person, which, to say the truth, has hanged many an honest man than he is."

"Well, but, Baillie," continued Oldbuck, "you have no objection to let me try him?"

"None in the world, Monkbarns.—I hear the serjeant below,—I'll rehearse the manual in the meanwhile—Baby, carry my gun and bayonet down to the room below—it makes less noise there when we ground arms."—And so exit the martial magistrate, with his maid behind him bearing his weapons.

"A good squir. that wench for a gouty champion," observed Oldbuck.—"Hector, my lad, hook on, hook on—Go with him, boy—keep him employed, man, for half an hour or so—butter him

with some warlike terms—praise his dress and address.”

Captain McIntyre, who, like many of his profession, looked down with infinite scorn on those citizen soldiers, who had assumed arms without any professional title to bear them, rose with great reluctance, observing, that he should not know what to say to Mr Littlejohn ; and that to see an old gouty shopkeeper attempting the exercise and duties of a private soldier, was really too ridiculous.

“ It may be so, Hector,” said the Antiquary, who seldom agreed with any person in the immediate proposition which was laid down,—“ it may possibly be so in this and some other instances ; but at present the country resembles the suitors in a small-debt court, who plead in person, for lack of cash to retain the professed heroes of the quill. I am sure in the one case we never regret the want of the acuteness and eloquence of the lawyers ; and so, I hope, in the other, we may manage to make shift with our hearts and muskets, though we shall lack some of the discipline of your martinets.”

“ I have no objection, I am sure, sir, that the whole world should fight if they please, if they will but allow me to be quiet,” said Hector, rising with dogged reluctance.

“ Yes, you are a very quiet personage, indeed ; whose ardour for quarrelling cannot pass so much as a poor phoca sleeping upon the beach !”

But Hector, who saw which way the conversation was tending, and hated all allusions to the foil he had sustained from the fish, made his escape before the Antiquary concluded the sentence.

CHAPTER IX.

Well, well, at worst 'tis neither theft nor coinage,
Granting I knew all that you charge me with.
What, tho' the tomb hath born a second birth,
And given the wealth to one that knew not on't,
Yet fair exchange was never robbery,
Far less pure bounty.—

Old Play.

THE Antiquary, in order to avail himself of the permission given him to question the accused party, chose rather to go to the apartment in which Ochiltree was detained, than to make the examination appear formal, by bringing him again into the magistrate's office. He found the old man seated by a window which looked out on the sea ; and as he gazed on that prospect, large tears found their way, as if unconsciously, to his eye, and from thence trickled down his cheeks and white beard. His features were, nevertheless, calm and composed, and his whole posture and mien indicated patience and resignation. Oldbuck had approached him without being observed, and roused him out of his musing, by saying kindly, “ I am sorry, Edie, to see you so much cast down about this matter.”

The mendicant started, dried his eyes very hastily with the sleeve of his gown, and, endeavouring to recover his usual tone of indifference and jocularity, answered, but with a voice more tremulous than usual, "I might weel hae judged, Monkbarns, it was you, or the like o' you, was coming in to disturb me—for it's ae great advantage o' prisons and courts o' justice. that ye may greet your een out an ye like, and nane o' the folk that's concerned about them will ever ask you what it's for."

"Well, Edie," replied Oldbuck, "I hope your present cause of distress is not so bad but it may be removed."

"And I had hoped, Monkbarns," answered the mendicant in a tone of reproach, "that ye had ken'd me better than to think that this bit trifling trouble o' my ain wad bring tears into my auld een, that hae seen far different kind o' distress—Na, na!—But here's been the puir lass, Caxon's daughter, seeking comfort, and has gotten unco little—there's been nae speerings o' Taffril's gun-brig since the last gale; and folk report on the key that a king's ship had struck on the Reef of Ratray, and a' hands lost—God forbid! for as sure as you live, Monkbarns, the puir lad Lovel, that ye liked sae weel, must have perished."

"God forbid indeed!" echoed the Antiquary,—
"I would rather Monkbarns house were on fire.

My poor dear friend and coadjutor !—I will down to the quay instantly.”

“ I’m sure ye’ll learn naething mair than I hae tauld ye, sir,” said Ochiltree, “ for the officer-folk here were very civil, (that is, for the like o’ them,) and lookit up a’ their letters and authorities, and could thrav nae light on’t either ac way or another.”

“ It can’t be true—it shall not be true,” said the Antiquary, “ and I won’t believe it if it were—Taffril’s an excellent seaman—and Lovel (my poor Lovel !) has all the qualities of a safe and pleasant companion by land or by sea—one, Edie, whom, from the ingenuousness of his disposition, I would chuse, did I ever go a sea voyage, (which I never do, unless across the ferry,) *fragilem mecum solve-re phaselum*, to be the companion of my risk, as one against whom the elements could nourish no vengeance. No, Edie, it is not, and cannot be true—it is a fiction of the idle jade Rumour, whom I wish hanged with her trumpet about her neck, that serves only with its screech-owl tones to fright honest folks out of their senses.—Let me know how you got into this scrape of your own.”

“ Are ye axing me as a magistrate, Monkbarns, or is it just for your ain satisfaction ?”

“ For my own satisfaction solely,” replied the Antiquary.

“ Put up your pocket-book and your keelyvine

pen then, for I downa speak out an' ye hae writing materials in your hands—they're a scaur to unlearned folk like me—Odd, ane o' the clerks in the neist room will clink down, in black and white, as muckle as wad hang a man, before ane kens what he's saying."

Monkbarns complied with the old man's humour, and put up his memorandum-book.

Eddie then went with great frankness through the part of the story already known to the reader, informing the Antiquary of the scene which he had witnessed between Dousterswivel and his patron in the ruins of St Ruth, and frankly confessing that he could not resist the opportunity of decoying the adept once more to visit the tomb of Misticot, with the purpose of taking a comic revenge upon him for his quackery. He had easily persuaded Steenie, who was a bold thoughtless young fellow, to engage in the frolic along with him, and the jest had been inadvertently carried a great deal farther than was designed. Concerning the pocket-book, he explained that he had expressed his surprise and sorrow as soon as he found it had been inadvertently brought off; and that publicly, before all the inmates of the cottage, Steenie had undertaken to return it the next day, and had only been prevented by his untimely fate.

The Antiquary pondered a moment, and then

said, "Your account seems very probable, Edie, and I believe it from what I know of the parties—but I think it likely that you know a great deal *more than you have thought it proper to tell me*, about this matter of the treasure-trove—I suspect you have acted the part of the *Lar Familiaris* in Plautus—a sort of Brownie, Edie, to speak to your comprehension, who watched over hidden treasures.—I do bethink me you were the first person we met when Sir Arthur made his successful attack upon Misticot's grave, and also that when the labourers began to flag, you, Edie, were again the first to leap into the trench, and to make the discovery of the treasure. Now you must explain all this to me, unless you would have me use you as ill as Euclio does Staphyla in the *Aulularia*."

"Lordsake, sir, what do I ken about your Howlolaria?—it's mair like a dog's language than a man's."

"You knew, however, of the box of treasure being there?" continued Oldbuck.

"Dear, sir, what likelihood is there o' that? d'ye think sac puir an auld creature as me wad hac kenn'd o' sic a like thing without getting some gude out o't?—and ye wot weel I sought nane and gat nane, like Michael Scott's man. What concern could I hac wi't?"

"That's just what I want you to explain to

me," said Oldbuck, "for I am positive you knew it was there."

"Your honour's a positive man, Monkbarns—and, for a positive man, I must needs allow ye're often in the right."

"You allow, then, that my belief is well-founded?"

Eddie nodded acquiescence.

"Then please to explain to me the whole affair from beginning to end," said the Antiquary.

"If it were a secret o' mine, Monkbarns," replied the beggar, "ye suldna ask twice, for I hae aye said ahint your back, that, for a' the nonsense maggots that ye whiles take into your head, ye are the maist wise and discreet o' a' our country gentles. But I'se e'en be open-hearted wi' you, and tell you, that this is a friend's secret, and that they suld draw me wi' wild horses, or saw me asunder, as they did the children of Ammon, sooner than I would speak a word mair about the matter, excepting this, that there was nae ill intended, but muckle gude, and that the purpose was to serve them that are worth twenty hundred o' me. But there's nae law, I trow, that makes it a sin to ken where ither folks' siller is, if we dinna pit hand till't oursel."

Oldbuck walked once or twice up and down the room in profound thought, endeavouring to find some plausible reason for transactions of a nature

so mysterious, but his ingenuity was totally at fault. He then placed himself before the prisoner.

“ This story of yours, friend Edie, is an absolute enigma, and would require a second *Œdipus* to solve it—who *Œdipus* was, I will tell you some other time if you remind me—However, whether it be owing to the wisdom or to the maggots with which you compliment me, I am strongly disposed to believe that you have spoken the truth, the rather, that you have not made any of these obtestations of the superior powers, which I observe you and your comrades always make use of when you mean to deceive folks.” (Here Edie could not suppress a smile.) “ If, therefore, you will answer me one question, I will endeavour to procure your liberation.”

“ If ye’ll let me hear the question,” said Edie, with the caution of a canny Scotchman, “ I’ll tell you whether I’ll answer it or no.”

“ It is simply,” said the Antiquary, “ Did Dousterswivel know any thing about the concealment of the chest of bullion ?”

“ He, the ill-fa’ard loon !” answered Edie, “ there wad hae been little speerings o’t had Dustersnival kenn’d it was there—it wad hae been butter in the black dog’s hause.”

“ I thought as much,” said Oldbuck. “ Well, Edie, if I procure your freedom, you must keep your day, and appear to clear me of the bail-bond,

for these are not times for prudent men to incur forfeitures, unless you can point out another *Aulam auri plenam quadrilibrem*—another *Search No. I.*”

“ Ah !” said the beggar, shaking his head, “ I doubt the bird’s flown that laid thae golden eggs—for I winna ca’ her goose, though that’s the gait it stands in the story-buick—But I’ll keep my day, Monkbarns, ye’se no loss a penny by me—And troth I wad fain be out again, now the weather’s fine, and then I hae the best chance o’ hearing the first news o’ my friends.”

“ Well, Edie, as the bouncing and thumping beneath has somewhat ceased, I presume Baillie Littlejohn has dismissed his military preceptor, and has retired from the labours of Mars to those oi’ Themis—I will have some conversation with him—But I cannot and will not believe any of these wretched news you were telling me.”

“ God send your honour may be right,” said the mendicant, as Oldbuck left the room.

The Antiquary found the magistrate exhausted with the fatigues of the drill, reposing in his gouty chair, humming the air, “ How merrily we live that soldiers be,” and between each bar comforting himself with a spoonful of mock-turtle soup. He ordered a similar refreshment for Oldbuck, who declined it, observing, that, not being a military man, he did not feel inclined to break his habit of

keeping regular hours for meals—Soldiers like you, Baillic, must snatch their food as they find means and time. But I am sorry to hear ill news of young Taffril's brig."

"Ah, poor fellow!—he was a credit to the town—much distinguished on the first of June."

"But," said Oldbuck, "I am shocked to hear you talk of him in the preterite tense."

"Troth, I fear there may be too much reason for it, Monkbarns; and yet let us hope the best. The accident is said to have happened in the Rat-tray reef of rocks, about twenty miles to the northward, near Dirtenalan Bay—I have sent to enquire about it—and your nephew run out himself as if he had been flying to get the Gazette of a victory."

Here Hector entered, exclaiming as he came in, "I believe it's all a damned lie—I can't find the least authority for it, but general rumour."

"And pray, Mr Hector," said his uncle, "if it had been true, whose fault would it have been that Lovel was on board?"

"Not mine, I am sure," answered Hector; "it would have been only my misfortune."

"Indeed!" said his uncle, "I should not have thought of that."

"Why, sir, with all your inclination to find me in the wrong, I suppose you will own my intention was not to blame in this case. I did my best

to hit Iovel, and, if I had been successful, 'tis clear my scrape would have been his, and his scrape would have been mine."

"And whom or what do you intend to hit now, that you are lugging with you that leathern magazine there, marked gunpowder?"

"I must be prepared for Lord Glenallan's moors on the twelfth, sir," said M'Intyre.

"Ah, Hector! thy great *chasse*, as the French call it, would take place best—

' Omne cum Proteus pecus agitare
Visere montes'——

Could you meet but with a *phoca* instead of an unwarlike heath-bird."

"The devil take the seal, sir, or *phoca*, if you chuse to call it so—it's rather hard one can never hear the end of a little piece of folly like that."

"Well, well," said Oldbuck, "I am glad you have the grace to be ashamed of it.—As I detest the whole race of Nimrods, I wish them all as well matched—Nay, never start off at a jest, man—I have done with the *phoca*—though, I dare say, the Baillie could tell us the value of seal-skins just now."

"They are up," said the magistrate, "they are well up—the fishing has been unsuccessful lately."

“ We can bear witness to that,” said the tormenting Antiquary, who was delighted with the hank this incident had given him over the young sportsman ; “ one word more, Hector, and

“ We’ll hang a seal-skin on thy recreant limbs.”

Aha, my boy !—come, never mind it, I must go to business—Baillie, a word with you—you must take bail—moderate bail—you understand—for old Ochiltree’s appearance.”

“ You don’t consider what you ask,” said the Baillie, “ the offence is assault and robbery.”

“ Hush ! not a word about it,” said the Antiquary, “ I gave you a hint before—I will possess you more fully hereafter—I promise you there is a secret.”

“ But, Mr Oldbuck, if the state is concerned, I, who do the whole drudgery business here, really have a title to be consulted, and until I am”——

“ Hush ! hush !” said the Antiquary, winking and putting his finger to his nose,—“ you shall have the full credit ; the entire management whenever matters are ripe. But this is an obstinate old fellow, who will not hear of two people being as yet let into his mystery, and he has not yet fully acquainted me with the clew to Dousterswivel’s devices.”

“ Ah! so we must tip that fellow the alien act, I suppose.”

“ To say truth, I wish you would.”

“ Say no more,” said the magistrate, “ it shall forthwith be done; he shall be removed *tanquam suspect*—I think that’s one of your own phrases, Monkbarns.”

“ It is classical, Baillie—you improve.”

“ Why, public business has of late pressed upon me so much, that I have been obliged to take my foreman into partnership.—I have had two several correspondencies with the Under Secretary of State; one on the proposed tax on Riga hemp-seed, and the other on putting down political societies. So you might as well communicate to me as much as you know of this old fellow’s discovery of a plot against the state.”

“ I will, instantly, when I am master of it—I hate the trouble of managing such matters myself—Remember, however, I did not say decidedly a plot against the state; I only say, I hope to discover by this man’s means a foul plot.”

“ If it be a plot at all, there must be treason in it, or sedition at least—Will you bail him for four hundred merks?”

“ Four hundred merks for an old Blue-gown!—Think on the act 1701 regulating bail-bonds!—Strike off a cypher from the sum—I am content to bail him for forty merks.”

“ Well, Mr Oldbuck, every body in Fairport is always willing to oblige you—and besides, I know that you are a prudent man, and one that would be as unwilling to lose forty, as four hundred merks. So I will accept your bail—*meo periculo*—what say you to that law phrase again?—I had it from a learned counsel.—I will vouch it, my lord, he said, *meo periculo*.”

“ And I will vouch for Edie Ochiltree, *meo periculo*, in like manner,” said Oldbuck. “ So let your clerk draw out the bail-bond, and I will sign it.”

When this ceremony had been performed, the Antiquary communicated to Edie the joyful tidings that he was once more at liberty, and directed him to make the best of his way to Monkbarns-house, to which he himself returned with his nephew, after having perfected their good work.

CHAPTER X.

Full of wise saws, and modern instances.

As You Like it.

“ I WISH to Heaven, Hector,” said the Antiquary, next morning after breakfast, “ you would spare our nerves, and not be keeping snapping that arquebuss of yours.”

“ Well, sir, I’m sure I’m sorry to disturb you ; but it’s a capital piece ; it’s a Joe Manton, that cost forty guineas.”

“ A fool and his money is soon parted, nephew ; I am glad you have so many guineas to throw away.”

“ Every one has their fancy, uncle,—you are fond of books.”

“ Ay, Hector, and if my collection were yours, you would make it fly to the gunsmith, the horse-market, the dog-breaker,—*Coemptos undique nobiles libros—mutare loricis Iberis.*”

“ I could not use your books, my dear uncle, that’s true ; and you will do well to provide for their being in better hands—but don’t let the

faults of my head fall on my heart—I would not part with a Cordery that belonged to an old friend, to get a set of horses like Lord Glenallan's."

"I don't think you would, lad, I don't think you would—I love to teaze you a little sometimes; it keeps up the spirit of discipline and habit of subordination—You will pass your time happily here having me to command you, instead of Captain, or Colonel, or 'Knight in Arms,' as Milton has it; and instead of the French, the *Gens humida ponti*—for as Virgil says,

‘*Sternunt se somno diversæ in littore phocæ,*’

which might be rendered,

‘Here phocæ slumber on the beach,
Within our Highland Hector's reach.’

Nay, if you grow angry I have done.—Besides, I see old Edie in the court-yard, with whom I have business. Good-bye, Hector—Do you remember how she splashed into the sea like her master Proteus, *et se jactu dedit æquor in altum?*”

M'Intyre,—waiting, however, till the door was shut,—gave then way to the natural impatience of his temper.

“My uncle is the best man in the world, and in his way the kindest; but rather than hear any

more about that cursed *phoca*, as he is pleased to call it, I would exchange for the West Indies and never see his face again."

Miss M'Intyre, gratefully attached to her uncle, and passionately fond of her brother, was, on such occasions, the usual envoy of reconciliation. She hastened to meet her uncle on his return, before he entered the parlour.

"Well, now, Miss Womankind, what is the meaning of that imploring countenance?—has Juno done any more mischief?"

"No, uncle; but Juno's master is in such fear of your joking him about the seal—I assure you, he feels it much more than you would wish—it's very silly of him to be sure; but then you can turn every body so well into ridicule"——

"Well, my dear, I will rein in my satire, and, if possible, speak no more of the *phoca*—I will not even speak of sealing a letter, but say *umph*, and give a nod to you when I want the wax-light—I am not *monitoribus asper*, but, Heaven knows, the most mild, quiet, and easy of human beings, whom sister, niece, and nephew, guide just as best pleases them."

With this little panegyric on his own docility, Mr Oldbuck entered the parlour, and proposed to his nephew a walk to the Mussel-crag. "I have some questions to ask at a woman at Mucklebackit's

cottage," he observed, "and I would willingly have a sensible witness with me—so, for fault of a better, Hector, I must be contented with you."

"There is old Edie, sir, or Caxon—could not they do better than me?"

"Upon my word, young man, you turn me over to pretty companions, and I am quite sensible of your politeness—No, sir, I intend the old Blue-gown shall go with me—not as a competent witness, for he is at present, as our friend Baillie Littlejohn says, (blessings on his learning!) *tanquam suspectus*, and you are *suspicionem major*, as our law has it."

"I wish I were a major, sir," said Hector, catching only the last, and, to a soldier's ear, the most impressive word in the sentence,—“but, without money or interest, there is little chance of getting the step.”

"Well, well, most doughty son of Priam," said the Antiquary, "be ruled by your friends, and there's no saying what may happen—Come away with me, and you shall see what may be useful to you should you ever sit upon a court-martial, sir."

"I have been on many a regimental court-martial, sir," answered Captain McIntyre.—“But here's a new came for you.”

"Much obliged, much obliged."

"I bought it from our drum-major, who came

into our regiment from the Bengal army when it came down the Red Sea. It was cut on the banks of the Indus, I assure you."

"Upon my word, 'tis a fine rattan, and well replaces that which the *ph*——Bah! what was I going to say?"

The party, consisting of the Antiquary, his nephew, and the old beggar, now took the sands towards Mussel-crag,—the former in the very highest mood of communicating information, and the others, under a sense of former obligation, and some hope for future favours, decently attentive to receive it. The uncle and nephew walked together, the mendicant about a step and a half behind, just near enough for his patron to speak to him by a slight inclination of his neck, and without the trouble of turning round. Petrie, in his Essay on Good-breeding, dedicated to the magistrates of Edinburgh, recommends, upon his own experience, as tutor in a family of distinction, this attitude to all led captains, tutors, dependants, and bottle-holders of every description. Thus escorted, the Antiquary moved along full of his learning, like a lordly man of war, and every now and then yawing to starboard and larboard to discharge a broadside upon his followers.

"And so it is your opinion," said he to the mendicant, "that this windfall—this *arca auri*,

as Plautus has it, will not greatly avail Sir Arthur in his necessities?"

"Unless he could find ten times as much," said the beggar, "and that I am sair doubtful of—I heard Puggie Orrock, and the tother thief of a sheriff-officer, or messenger, speaking about it—and things are ill aff when the like o' them can speak crouselly about ony gentleman's affairs. I doubt Sir Arthur will be in stane wa's for debt, unless there's swift help and certain."

"You speak like a fool," said the Antiquary.—"Nephew, it is a remarkable thing, that in this happy country no man can be legally imprisoned for debt."

"Indeed, sir?" said M'Intyre; "I never knew that before—that part of our law would suit some of our mess well."

"And if they arena confined for debt," said Ochiltree, "what is't that tempts sae mony puir creatures to bide in the tolbooth o' Fairport yonder?—they a' say they were put there by their creditors—Odd! they maun like it better than I do if they're there o' free will."

"A very natural observation, Edie, and many of your betters would make the same, but it is founded entirely upon ignorance of the feudal system.—Hector, be so good as to attend, unless you are looking out for another—Ahem!—(Hector

compelled himself to give attention at this hint.)—And you, Edie, it may be useful to you, *rerum cognoscere causas*. The nature and origin of warrant for caption is a thing *haud alienum a Scœvolæ studiis*. You must know then once more, that nobody can be arrested in Scotland for debt."

"I haena muckle concern wi' that, Monkbarns," said the old man, "for naebody wad trust a bodle to a gaberlunzie."

"I pr'ythee peace, man—As a compulsitor, therefore, of payment,—that being a thing to which no debtor is naturally inclined, as I have too much reason to warrant from the experience I have had with my own,—we had first the letters of four forms, a sort of gentle invitation, by which our sovereign lord the king, interesting himself as a monarch, should, in the regulation of his subjects' private affairs, at first by mild exhortation, and afterwards by letters of more strict enjoinder and more hard compulsion——What do you see at that bird, Hector?—it's but a scamaw."

"It's a pictarnie, sir," said Edie.

"Well, what an' if it were—what does that signify at present?—But I see you're impatient; so I will waive the letters of four forms, and come to the modern process of diligence.—You suppose, now, a man's committed to prison because he cannot pay his debt? Quite otherwise; the truth is, the king is so good as to interfere at the request of

the creditor, and to send the debtor his royal command to do him justice within a certain time—fifteen days, or six, as the case may be. Well, the man resists and disobeys—what follows? Why, that he be lawfully and rightfully declared a rebel to our gracious sovereign, whose command he has disobeyed, and that by three blasts of a horn at the market-place of Edinburgh, the metropolis of Scotland. And he is then legally imprisoned, not on account of any civil debt, but because of his ungrateful contempt of the royal mandate. What say you to that, Hector?—there's something you never knew before."

"No, uncle; but, I own, if I wanted money to pay my debts, I would rather thank the king to send me some, than to declare me a rebel for not doing what I could not do."

"Your education has not led you to consider these things," replied his uncle; "you are incapable of estimating the elegance of the legal fiction, and the manner in which it reconciles that duress, which, for the protection of commerce, it has been found necessary to extend towards refractory debtors, with the most scrupulous attention to the liberty of the subject."

"I don't know, sir; but if a man must pay his debt or go to jail, it signifies but little whether he goes as a debtor or a rebel, I should think. But you say this command of the king's gives a license

of so many days—now, egad, were I in the scrape, I would beat a march, and leave the king and the creditor to settle it among themselves before they came to extremities.”

“ So wad I,” said Edie ; “ I wad gie them leg-bail to a certainty.”

“ True ; but those whom the law suspects of being unwilling to abide her formal visit, she proceeds with by means of a shorter and more unceremonious call, as dealing with persons on whom patience and favour would be utterly thrown away.”

“ Aye,” said Ochiltree, “ that will be what they ca’ the fugie-warrants—I hae some skeel in them. There’s Border-warrants too in the south country, unco rash uncanny things—I was ta’en up on ane at Saint James’s Fair, and keepit in the auld kirk at Kelso the hail day and night ; and a cauld goustie place it was, I’sc assure ye.—But whatna wife’s this, wi’ her creel on her back ?—It’s puir Maggie hersel, I’m thinking.”

It was so. The poor woman’s sense of her loss, if not diminished, was become at least mitigated by the inevitable necessity of attending to the means of supporting her family, and her salutation to Oldbuck was made in an odd mixture, between the usual language of solicitation with which she plied her customers, and the tone of lamentation for her recent calamity.

“ How’s a’ wi’ ye the day, Monkbarns ?—I

havena had the grace yet to come down to thank your honour for the grace ye did poor Steenie, wi' laying his head in a rath grave, puir fallow."—Here she whimpered and wiped her eyes with the corner of her blue apron.—“But the fishing comes on no that ill, though the gudeman hasna had the heart to gang to sea himsel—Atweel I wad fain tell him it wad do him gude to put hand to wark—but I'm maist feared to speak to him—and it's an unco thing to hear ane o' us speak that gate o' a man—however, I hae some dainty caller haddies, and they sall be but three shillings the dozen, for I hae nae pith to drive a bargain c'ennow, and maun just take what ony Christian body will gie, wi' few words and nae flyting.”

“What shall we do, Hector?” said Oldbuck, pausing; “I got into disgrace with my woman-kind for making a bad bargain with her before. These maritime animals, Hector, are unlucky to our family.”

“Pooh, sir, what would you do?—give poor Maggie what she asks, or allow me to send a dish of fish up to Monkbarns.”

And he held out the money to her; but Maggie drew back her hand. “Na, na, Captain; ye're ower young and ower free o' your siller—ye should never tak a fish-wife's first bode, and troth I think maybe a flyte wi' the auld housekeeper at Monkbarns, or Miss Grizel, would do me some gude

—And I want to see what that hellicate quean Jenny Rintherout's doing—folk said she wasna weel—She'll be vexing hersel about Steenie, the silly tappie, as if he wad ever hae lookit ower his shouther at the like o' her!—Weel, Monkbarns, they're braw caller haddies, and they'll bid me unco little indeed at the house if ye want crappit heads the day."

And so on she paced with her burthen, grief, gratitude for the sympathy of her betters, and the habitual love of traffic and of gain, chasing each other through her thoughts.

"And now that we are before the door of their hut," said Ochiltree, "I wad fain ken, Monkbarns, what has gar'd ye plague yoursel wi' me a' this length? I tell ye sincerely I hae nae pleasure in ganging in there. I downa bide to think how the young hae fa'en on a' sides o' me, and left me an aseless auld stump wi' hardly a green leaf on't."

"This old woman," said Oldbuck, "sent you on a message to the Earl of Glenallan, did she not?"

"Aye!" said the surprised mendicant, "how ken ye that sae weel?"

"Lord Glenallan told me himself; so there is no delation—no breach of trust on your part—and as he wishes me to take her evidence down on some important family matters, I chose to bring you with me, because in her situation, hovering between

dotage and consciousness, it is possible that your voice and appearance may awaken trains of recollection which I should otherwise have no means of exciting. The human mind—what are you about, Hector?”

“ I was only whistling for the dog, sir ; she always roves too wide—I knew I should be troublesome to you.”

“ Not at all, not at all—the human mind is to be treated like a skein of ravelled silk, where you must cautiously secure one free end before you can make any progress in disentangling it.”

“ I ken naething about that,” said the gaberlunzie ; “ but an’ my auld acquaintance be hersel, or any thing like hersel, she may come to wind us a pirn. It’s fearsome baith to see and hear her when she wampishes about her arms, and gets to her English, and speaks as if she were a prent book,—let a be an auld fisher’s wife. But, indeed, she had a grand education, and was muckle ta’en out afore she married an unco bit beneath hersel. She’s aulder than me bÿ half a score years—but I mind weel aneugh they made as muckle wark about her making a half-merk marriage wi’ Simon Mucklebackit, this Saunders’s father, as if she had been ane o’ the gentry. But she got into favour again, and then she lost it again, as I hac heard her son say, when he was a muckle chield ; and then they got muckle siller, and left the Countess’s

land and settled here. But things never throve wi' them. Howsomever, she's a weel-educate woman, and an' she win to her English, as I hae heard her do at an orra time, she may come to fickle us 'a'."

CHAPTER XI.

Life ebbs from such old age, unmark'd and silent,
As the slow neap-tide leaves yon stranded galley.—
Late she rock'd merrily at the least impulse
That wind or wave could give ; but now her keel
Is settling on the sand, her mast has ta'en
An angle with the sky, from which it shifts not.
Each wave receding shakes her less and less,
Till, bedded on the strand, she shall remain
Useless as motionless.

Old Play.

As the Antiquary lifted the latch of the hut, he was surprised to hear the shrill tremulous voice of Elspeth chaunting forth an old ballad in a wild and doleful recitative.

“ The herring loves the merry moon-light,
The mackerel loves the wind,
But the oyster loves the dredging sang,
For they come of a gentle kind.”

A diligent collector of these legendary scraps of ancient poetry, his foot refused to cross the threshold when his ear was thus arrested, and his hand instinctively took pencil and memorandum-book. From time to time the old woman spoke as if to

the children—" O aye, hinnies, whisht, whisht !
and I'll begin a bonnier ane than that—

" Now haud your tongue, baith wife and carle,
And listen great and sma',
And I will sing of Glenallan's Earl
That fought on the red Harlaw.

" The cronach's cried on Bennachie,
And down the Don and a',
And hieland and lawland may mournfu' be
For the sair field of Harlaw.—

I dinna mind the neist verse weel—my memory's
failed, and there's unco thoughts come ower me—
God keep us frae temptation !"

Here her voice sunk in indistinct muttering.

" It's a historical ballad," said Oldbuck eagerly,
' a genuine and undoubted fragment of minstrelsy !
—Percy would admire its simplicity—Ritson could
not impugn its authenticity."

" Aye, but it's a sad thing," said Ochiltree, " to
see human nature sae far owerta'en as to be skirl-
ing at auld sangs on the back of a loss like her's."

" Hush, hush !" said the Antiquary,—“ she has
gotten the thread of the story again.”—And as he
spoke, she sung :

" They saddled a hundred milk-white steeds,
They hae bridled a hundred black,
With a chafron of steel on each horse's head,
' And a good knight upon his back."——

“Chafron !” exclaimed the Antiquary,—“equivalent, perhaps, to *cheveron*—the word’s worth a dollar,”—and down it went in his red book.

“ They hadna ridden a mile, a mile,
A mile, but barely ten,
When Donald came branking down the brae
Wi’ twenty thousand men.

“ Their tartans they were waving wide,
Their glaives were glancing clear,
The pibrochs rung frae side to side,
Would deafen ye to hear.

“ The great Earl in his stirrups stood
That Highland host to see :
Now here a knight that’s stout and good
May prove a jeopardie :

“ ‘ What would’st thou do, my squire so gay,
That rides beside my reyne,
Were ye Glenallan’s Earl the day,
And I were Roland Cheyne ?

“ ‘ To turn the rein were sin and shame,
To fight were wond’rous peril,
What would ye do now, Roland Cheyne,
Were ye Glenallan’s Earl ?’ ”

“ Ye maun ken, hinnies, that this Roland Cheyne, for as poor and auld as I sit in the chimney-neuk, was my forbear, and an awfu’ man he was that day in the fight, but specially after the Earl had fa’en ; for he blamed himsel for the counsel he gave, to

fight before Mar came up wi' Mearns, and Aberdeen, and Angus."

Her voice rose and became more animated as she recited the warlike counsel of her ancestor :

" ' Were I Glenallan's Earl this tide,
And ye were Roland Cheyne,
The spear should be in my horse's side,
And the bridle upon his mane.

" ' If they hae twenty thousand blades,
And we twice ten times ten,
Yet they hae but their tartan plaids,
And we are mail-clad men.

" ' My horse shall ride through ranks sae rude,
As through the moorland fern,
Then ne'er let the gentle Norman blude
Grow cauld for Highland kerne.' "

" Do you hear that, nephew ?" said Oldbuck ;
" you observe your Gaelic ancestors were not held
in high repute formerly by the Lowland warriors."

" I hear," said Hector, " a silly old woman sing
a silly old song. I am surprised, sir, that you,
who will not listen to Ossian's songs of Selma, can
be pleased with such trash ; I vow, I have not seen
or heard a worse halfpenny ballad ; I don't believe
you could match it in any pedlar's pack in the
country. I should be ashamed to think that the
honour of the Highlands could be affected by such

doggrel.”—And, tossing up his head, he snuffed the air indignantly.

Apparently the old woman heard the sound of their voices ; for, ceasing her song, she called out, “ Come in, sirs, come in—good-will never halted at the door-stane.”

They entered, and found to their surprise Elspeth alone, sitting “ ghastly on the hearth,” like the personification of Old Age in the Hunter’s song of the Owl,* “ wrinkled, tattered, vile, dim-eyed, discoloured, torpid.”

“ They’re a’ out,” she said, as they entered ; “ but, an’ ye will sit a blink, somebody will be in. If ye hae business wi’ my gude-daughter, or my son, they’ll be in belive,—I never speak on business mysel.—Bairns, gie them seats—the bairns are a’ gane out, I trow,”—looking around her,—“ I was crooning to keep them quiet a wee while since ; but they hae cruppin out some gate—Sit down, sirs. they’ll be in belive ;” and she dismissed her spindle from her hand to twirl upon the floor, and soon seemed exclusively occupied in regulating its motion, as unconscious of the presence of the strangers as she appeared indifferent to their rank or business there.

“ I wish,” said Oldbuck, “ she would resume

* See Mrs Grant on the Highland Superstitions, vol. ii. p. 260, for this fine translation from the Gaelic.

that canticle, or legendary fragment—I always suspected there was a skirmish of cavalry before the main battle of the Harlaw.”

“ If your honour pleases,” said Edie, “ had ye not better proceed to the business that brought us a’ here? I’se engage to get ye the sang ony time.”

“ I believe you are right, Edie—*Do manus*—I submit. But how shall we manage? She sits there, the very image of dotage—speak to her, Edie—try if you can make her recollect having sent you to Glenallan-house.”

Edie rose accordingly, and, crossing the floor, placed himself in the same position which he had occupied during his former conversation with her. “ I’m rair to see ye looking sae weel, cummer; the fair, that the black ox has tramped on ye since I was aneath your roof-tree.”

“ Ay,” said Elspeth; but rather from a general idea of misfortune, than any exact recollection of what had happened,—“ there has been distress amang us of late—I wonder how younger folk bide it—I bide it ill—I canna hear the wind whistle, and the sea roar, but I think I see the coble whombled keel up, and some o’ them struggling in the waves!—Eh, sirs, sic weary dreams as folk hae between sleeping and waking, before they win to the lang sleep and the sound!—I could amaist think whiles, my son, or else Steenie, my oc, was

dead, and that I had seen the burial. Isna that a queer dream for a daft auld carline? what for should ony o' them dee before me?—it's out o' the course o' nature, ye ken."

"I think you'll make very little of this stupid old woman," said Hector; who still nourished, perhaps, some feelings of the dislike excited by the disparaging mention of his countrymen in her lay—"I think you'll make but little of her, sir; and it's wasting our time to sit here and listen to her dotage."

"Hector," said the Antiquary indignantly, "if you do not respect her misfortunes, respect at least her old age and grey hairs,—this is the last stage of existence so finely treated by the Latin poet :

' Omni
Membrorum damno major dementia, quæ nec
Nomina servorum, nec vultus agnoscit amici,
Cum quos preterita cœnavit nocte, nec illos
Quos genuit, quos eduxit.' "

"That's Latin," said Elspeth, rousing herself as if she attended to the lines which the Antiquary recited with great pomp of diction,—“That's Latin,” and she cast a wild glance around her—“Has there a priest fund me out at last?”

“You see, nephew, her comprehension is almost equal to your own of that fine passage.”

“I hope you think, sir, that I knew it to be Latin as well as she did?”

“Why, as to that—but stay, she is about to speak.”

“I will have no priest—none,” said the beldame with impotent vehemence—“as I have lived I will die—none shall say that I betrayed my mistress, though it were to save my soul.”

“That bespoke a foul conscience,” said the mendicant; “I wuss she wad mak a clean breast, an’ it were but for her ain sake,” and he again assailed her.

“Weel, gadewife, I did your errand to the Yerl.”

“To what Earl? I ken nae Earl—I kenn’d a Countess ance—I wish to heaven I had never kenn’d her! for by that acquaintance, neighbour, there cam,”—and she counted her withered fingers as she spoke—“first, pride, then malice, then revenge, then false witness; and murther tirl’d at the door-pin if he cam na ben—And werena thae pleasant guests, think ye, to take up their quarters in ae woman’s heart? I trow there was routh o’ company.”

“But, cummer, it wasna the Countess of Glenallan I meant, but her son, him that was Lord Geraldin.”

“I mind it now,” she said; “I saw him no that lang syne, and we had a heavy speech thegi-

ther.—Eh, sirs, the comely young lord is turned as auld and frail as I am—it's muckle that sorrow and heart-break, and crossing of true love, will do wi' young blood—But suldna his mither hae lookit to that hersel?—We were but to do her bidding, ye ken—I am sure there's naebody can blame me—he wasna my son, and she was my mistress—Ye ken how the rhyme says—I hae maist forgotten how to sing, or else the tune's left my auld head :

‘ He turn’d him right and round again,
Said, Scorn na at my mither ;
Light loves I may get mony a ane,
But minnie ne’er anither.’

‘Then he was but of the half blude, ye ken, and her’s was the right Glenallan after a’. Na, na, I maun never mane doing and suffering for the Countess Joseelin. Never will I mane for that.”

Then drawing her flax from the distaff, with the dogged air of one who is resolved to confess nothing, she resumed her interrupted occupation.

“ I hae heard,” said the mendicant, taking his cue from what Oldbuck had told him of the family history,—“ I hae heard, cummer, that some ill tongue suld hae come between the Earl, that’s Lord Geraldin, and his young bride.”

“ Ill tongue?” she said, in hasty alarm ; “ and what had she to fear frae an ill tongue?—she was

gude and fair aneugh—at least a' body said sae—
But had she keepit her ain tongue aff ither folk,
she might hae been living like a leddy for a' that's
come and gane yet."

"But I hae heard say, gudewife, there was a
clatter in the country, that her husband and her
were ower sibb when they married."

"Wha durst speak o' that?" said the old woman
hastily; "Wha durst say they were married?—
Wha kenn'd o' that?—not the Countess—not I—
if they wedded in secret they were severed in se-
cret—They drank of the fountains of their ain de-
ceit."

"No, wretched beldame," exclaimed Oldbuck,
who could keep silence no longer, "they drank the
poison that you and your wicked mistress prepared
for them."

"Ha, ha!" she replied, "I aye thought it would
come to this—it's but sitting silent when they ex-
amine me—there's nae torture in our days—and if
there is, let them rend me!—It's ill o' the vassal's
mouth that betrays the bread it eats."

"Speak to her, Edie," said the Antiquary,
"she knows your voice, and answers to it most
readily."

"We shall mak naething mair out o' her," said
Ochiltree. "When she has clinkit hersel down
that way, and faulded her arms, she winna speak
a word, they say, for weeks thegither. And be-

sides, to my thinking, her face is sair changed since we came in. However, I'se try her ance mair to satisfy your honour.—So ye canna keep in mind, cummer, that your auld mistress, the Countess Joscelin, has been removed ?”

“Removed !” she exclaimed ; for that name never failed to produce its usual effect upon her ; “then we maun a' follow. A' maun ride when she is in the saddle—tell them to let Lord Geraldin ken we're on before them—bring my hood and scarf—ye wadna hae me gang in the carriage wi' my leddy, and my hair in this fashion.”

She raised her shrivelled arms, and seemed busied like a woman who puts on her cloak to go abroad, then dropped them slowly and stiffly ; and, the same idea of a journey still floating apparently through her head, she proceeded in a hurried and interrupted manner,—“Call Miss Neville—What do you mean by Lady Geraldin ? I said Eveline Neville—not Lady Geraldin—there's no Lady Geraldin—tell her that, and bid her change her wet gown, and no' look sae pale.—Bairn ! what should she do wi' a bairn ?—maidens hae nane, I trow.—Teresa—Teresa—my lady calls us !—Bring a candle, the grand stair-case is as mirk as a Yule midnight—We are coming, my lady !” With these words she sunk back on the settle, and from thence sidelong to the floor.

Eddie ran to support her, but hardly got her in

his arms, before he said, "It's a' ower, she has passed away even with that last word."

"Impossible," said Oldbuck, hastily advancing, as did his nephew. But nothing was more certain. She had expired with the last hurried word that left her lips; and all that remained before them, were the mortal reliques of the creature who had so long struggled with an internal sense of concealed guilt, joined to all the distresses of age and poverty.

"God grant that she be gane to a better place," said Edie, as he looked on the lifeless body; "but, oh! there was something lying hard and heavy at her heart. I have seen mony a ane die, baith in the field o' battle and a fair-strae death at hame, but I wad rather see them a' ower again, as sic a fearfu' flitting as her's."

"We must call in the neighbours," said Oldbuck, when he had somewhat recovered his horror and astonishment, "and give warning of this additional calamity—I wish she could have been brought to a confession. And, though of far less consequence, I could have wished to transcribe that metrical fragment. But Heaven's will must be done!"

They left the hut accordingly, and gave the alarm in the hamlet, whose matrons instantly assembled to compose the limbs and arrange the body of her who might be considered as the mo-

ther of their settlement. Oldbuck promised his assistance for the funeral.

“Your honour,” said Ailison Breck, who was next in age to the deceased, “suld send down something to us for keeping up our hearts at the lyke-wake, for a’ Saunders’s gin, puir man, was drucken out at the burial o’ Steenie, and we’ll no get mony to sit dry-lipped aside the corpse. Elspeth was unco clever in her young days, as I can mind right weel, but there was aye a word o’ her no being that chancy—Ane suldna speak ill o’ the dead—mair by token, o’ a’r’s cummer and neighbour—but there was queer things said about a leddy and a bairn or she left the Craighburnfoot. And sae, in gude troth, it will be a puir lyke-wake, unless your honour sends us something to keep us crack-ing.”

“You shall have some whisky,” answered Oldbuck, “the rather that you have preserved the proper word for that ancient custom of watching the dead.—You observe, Hector, this is genuine Teutonic, from the Gothic *Leichnam*, a corpse. It is quite erroneously called *Late-wake*, though Brand favours that modern corruption and derivation.”

“I believe,” said Hector to himself, “my uncle would give away Monkbarns to any one who would come to ask it in genuine Saxon! Not a drop of whisky would the old creatures have got, had their president asked it for the use of the *Late-wake*.”

While Oldbuck was giving some further directions, and promising assistance, a servant of Sir Arthur's came riding very hard along the sands, and stopped his horse when he saw the Antiquary. "There had something," he said, "very particular happened at the Castle," (he could not, or would not, explain what,) "and Miss Wardour had sent him off express to Monkbarns, to beg that Mr Oldbuck would come to them without a moment's delay."

"I am afraid," said the Antiquary, "his course also is drawing to a close—What can I do?"

"Do, sir?" exclaimed Hector with his characteristic impatience,—“get on the horse, and turn his head homeward—you will be at Knockwinnock Castle in ten minutes.”

"He is quite a free goer," said the servant, dismounting to adjust the girths and stirrups,—“he only pulls a little if he feels a dead weight on him.”

"I should soon be a dead weight *off* him, my friend," said the Antiquary.—“What the devil, nephew, are you weary of me? or do you suppose me weary of my life. that I should get on the back of such a Bucephalus as that? No, no, my friend, if I am to be at Knockwinnock to-day, it must be by walking quietly forward on my own feet, which I will do with as little delay as possible. Captain

M'Intyre may ride that animal himself, if he pleases."

"I have little hope I could be of any use, uncle, but I cannot think of their distress without wishing to shew sympathy at least—so I will ride on before, and announce to them that you are coming.—I'll trouble you for your spurs, my friend."

"You will scarce need them, sir," said the man, taking them off at the same time, and buckling them upon Captain M'Intyre's heels, "he's very frank to the road."

Oldbuck stood astonished at this last act of temerity. "Are you mad, Hector?" he said, "or have you forgotten what is said by Quintus Curtius, with whom, as a soldier, you must needs be familiar, *Nobilis equus umbra quidem virgæ regitur; ignavus ne calcari quidem excitari potest*, which plainly shews that spurs are useless in every case, and, I may add, dangerous in most."

But Hector, who cared little for the opinion of either Quintus Curtius, or of the Antiquary, upon such a topic, only answered with a heedless "Never fear, never fear, sir."

"With that he gave his able horse the head,
And, bending forward, struck his armed heels
Against the panting sides of this poor jade,
Up to the rowel-head; and starting so,
He seemed in running to devour the way,
Staying no longer question."——

“ There †hey go, well matched,” said Oldbuck, looking after them as they started,—“ a mad horse and a wild boy, the two most unruly creatures in Christendom ; and all to get half an hour sooner to a place where nobody wants him ; for I doubt Sir Arthur’s griefs are beyond the cure of our light horseman. It must be the villainy of Douster-swivel, for whom Sir Arthur has done so much ; for I cannot help observing, that, with some natures, Tacitus’s maxim holdeth good : *Beneficia eo usque læta sunt dum videntur exsolvi posse ; ubi multum antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur*—from which a wise man might take a caution, not to oblige any man beyond the degree in which he may expect to be requited, lest he should make his debtor a bankrupt in gratitude.”

Murmuring to himself such scraps of cynical philosophy, our Antiquary paced the sands towards Knockwinnock ; but it is necessary we should outstrip him, for the purpose of explaining the reasons of his being so anxiously summoned thither.

CHAPTER XII.

So, while the Goose, of whom the fable told,
Incumbent, brooded o'er her eggs of gold,
With hand outstretch'd, impatient to destroy,
Stole on her secret nest the cruel Boy,
Whose gripe rapacious changed her splendid dream,
—For wings vain fluttering, and for dying scream.
The Loves of the Sea-weeds.

FROM the time that Sir Arthur Wardour had become possessor of the treasure found in Misticot's grave, he had been in a state of mind more resembling ecstacy than sober sense. Indeed, at one time his daughter had become seriously apprehensive for his intellects ; for, as he had no doubt that he had the secret of possessing himself of wealth to an unbounded extent, his language and carriage were those of a man who had acquired the philosopher's stone. He talked of buying contiguous estates, that would have led him from one side of the island to the other, as if he were determined to brook no neighbour, save the sea. He corresponded with an architect of eminence, upon a plan of renovating the castle of his forefathers, on a style of extended

magnificence that might have rivalled that of Windsor, and laying out the grounds on a suitable scale. Troops of liveried menials were already, in fancy, marshalled in his halls, and—for what may not unbounded wealth authorize its possessor to aspire to?—the coronet of a marquis, perhaps of a duke, was glittering before his imagination. His daughter—to what matches might she not look forward?—Even an alliance with the blood-royal was not beyond the sphere of his hopes. His son was already a general—and he himself whatever ambition could dream of in its wildest visions.

In this mood, if any one endeavoured to bring Sir Arthur down to the regions of common life, his replies were in the vein of *Ancient Pistol* :

“ A fico for the world, and worldlings base !
I speak of Africa and golden joys !”

The reader may conceive the amazement of Miss Wardour, when, instead of undergoing an investigation concerning the addresses of Lovel, as she had expected from the long conference of her father with Mr Oldbuck, upon the morning of the fated day when the treasure was discovered, the conversation of Sir Arthur announced an imagination heated with the hopes of possessing the most unbounded wealth. But she was seriously alarmed when Dousterswivel was sent for to the castle, and was closeted with her father—his mishap con-

doled with—his part taken, and his loss compensated. All the suspicions which she had long entertained respecting this man became strengthened, by observing his pains to keep up the golden dreams of her father, and to secure for himself, under various pretexts, as much as possible out of the wind-fall which had so strangely fallen to Sir Arthur's share.

Other evil symptoms began to appear, following close on each other. Letters arrived every post, which Sir Arthur, as soon as he had looked at the directions, flung into the fire without taking the trouble to open them. Miss Wardour could not help suspecting that these epistles, the contents of which seemed to be known to her father by a sort of intuition, came from pressing creditors. In the meanwhile, the temporary aid which he had received from the treasure, dwindled fast away. By far the greater part had been swallowed up by the necessity of paying the bill of six hundred pounds, which had threatened Sir Arthur with instant distress. Of the rest, some part was given to the adept, some wasted upon extravagancies which seemed to the poor knight fully authorized by his full-blown hopes,—and some went to stop for a time the mouths of such claimants, who, being weary of fair promises, had become of opinion with Harpagon, that it was necessary to touch something substantial. At length circumstances announced

but too plainly, that it was all expended within two or three days after its discovery, and there appeared no prospect of a supply. Sir Arthur, naturally impatient, now taxed Dousterswivel anew with breach of these promises, through which he had hoped to convert all his lead into gold. But that worthy gentleman's turn was now served ; and as he had grace enough to wish to avoid witnessing the fall of the house which he had undermined, he was at the trouble of bestowing a few learned terms of art upon Sir Arthur, that at least he might not be tormented before his time. He took leave of him, with assurances that he would return to Knockwinnock the next morning, with such information as would not fail to relieve Sir Arthur from all his distresses.

“ For, since I have consulted in such matters, I ave never,” said Mr Herman Dousterswivel, “ approached so near de *arcanum*, what you call de great mystery,—de Panchresta—de Polychresta—I do know as much of it as Pelaso de Taranta, or Basilius—and either I will bring you in two and tree days de No. II. of Mr Mishdigoat, or you shall call me one knave myself, and never look me in de face again no more at all.”

The adept departed with this assurance, in the firm resolution of making good the latter part of the proposition, and never again appearing before

his injured patron. Sir Arthur remained in a doubtful and anxious state of mind. The positive assurances of the philosopher, with the hard words Panchresta, Basilius, and so forth, produced some effect on his mind. But he had been too often deluded by such jargon to be absolutely relieved of his doubt, and he retired for the evening into his library, in the fearful state of one who, hanging over a precipice, and without the means of retreat, perceives the stone on which he rests gradually parting from the rest of the crag, and about to give way with him.

The visions of hope decayed, and there increased in proportion that feverish agony of anticipation, with which a man, educated in a sense of consequence, and possessed of opulence,—the supporter of an ancient name, and the father of two promising children,—foresaw the hour approaching which should deprive him of all the splendour which time had made familiarly necessary to him, and send him forth into the world to struggle with poverty, with rapacity, and with scorn. Under these dire forebodings, his temper, exhausted by the sickness of delayed hope, became peevish and fretful, and his words and actions sometimes expressed a reckless desperation, which alarmed Miss Wardour extremely. We have seen, on a former occasion, that Sir Arthur was a man of passions lively and quick, in proportion to the weakness of his charac-

ter in other respects ; he was unused to contradiction, and if he had been hitherto, in general, good-humoured and cheerful, it was probably because the course of his life had afforded no such frequent provocation as to render his irritability habitual.

On the third morning after Dousterswivel's departure, the servant, as usual, laid on the breakfast table the newspaper and letters of the day. Miss Wardour took up the former to avoid the continued ill-humour of her father, who had wrought himself into a violent passion, because the toast was over-browned.

" I perceive how it is," was his concluding speech on this interesting subject,—“ my servants, who have had their share of my fortune, begin to think there is little to be made of me in future. But while I *am* the scoundrels' master I will be so, and permit no neglect—no, nor endure a hair's-breadth diminution of the respect I am entitled to exact from them.”

" I am ready to leave your honour's service this instant," said the domestic upon whom the fault had been charged, " as soon as you order payment of my wages."

Sir Arthur, as if stung by a serpent, thrust his hand into his pocket, and instantly drew out the money which it contained, but which was short of the man's claim. " What money have you got,

Miss Wardour?" he said, in a tone of affected calmness, but which concealed violent agitation.

Miss Wardour gave him her purse; he attempted to count the bank-notes which it contained, but could not reckon them. After twice miscounting the sum, he threw the whole to his daughter, and saying in a stern voice, "Pay the rascal, and let him leave the house instantly!" he strode out of the room.

The mistress and servant stood alike astonished at the agitation and vehemence of his manner.

"I am sure, ma'am, if I had thought I was particularly wrang, I wadna hae made ony answer when Sir Arthur challenged me—I hae been lang in his service, and he has been a kind master, and you a kind mistress, and I wad like ill ye should think I wad start for a hasty word—I am sure it was very wrang o' me to speak about wages to his honour, when maybe he has something to vex him. I had nae thoughts o' leaving the family in this way."

"Go down stairs, Robert," said his mistress—"something has happened to fret my father—go down stairs, and let Alick answer the bell."

When the man left the room, Sir Arthur re-entered, as if he had been watching his departure. "What's the meaning of this?" he said hastily, as he observed the notes lying still on the table—"Is

he not gone? Am I neither to be obeyed as a master or a father?"

"He is gone to give up his charge to the house-keeper, sir,—I thought there was not such instant haste."

"There *is* haste, Miss Wardour," answered her father, interrupting her;—"What I do henceforth in the house of my forefathers, must be done speedily, or never."

He then sat down, and took up with a trembling hand the basin of tea prepared for him, protracting the swallowing of it, as if to delay the necessity of opening the post-letters which lay on the table, and which he eyed from time to time, as if they had been a nest of adders ready to start into life and spring upon him.

"You will be happy to hear," said Miss Wardour, willing to withdraw her father's mind from the gloomy reflections in which he appeared to be plunged, "you will be happy to hear, sir, that Lieutenant Taffril's gun-brig has got safe into Leith Roads—I observe there had been apprehensions for his safety—I am glad we did not hear them till they were contradicted."

"And what is Taffril and his gun-brig to me?"

"Sir!" said Miss Wardour in astonishment; for Sir Arthur, in his ordinary state of mind, took a fidgetty sort of interest in all the gossip of the day and country.

“ I say,” he repeated, in a higher and still more impatient key, “ what do I care who is saved or lost ?—it’s nothing to me, I suppose ?”

“ I did not know you were busy, Sir Arthur ; and thought, as Mr Taffril is a brave man, and from our own country, you would be happy to hear”——

“ O, I am happy—as happy as possible—and, to make you happy too, you shall have some of my good news in return.” And he caught up a letter. “ It does not signify which I open first—they are all to the same tune.”

He broke the seal hastily, run the letter over, and then threw it to his daughter—“ Ay ; I could not have lighted more happily !—this places the cope-stone.”

Miss Wardour, in silent terror, took up the letter. “ Read it. Read it aloud !” said her father ; “ it cannot be read too often ; it will serve to break you in for other good news of the same kind.”

She began to read with a faltering voice, “ Dear Sir.”

“ He *dears* me too, you see—this impudent drudge of a writer’s office, who, a twelvemonth since, was not fit company for my second table—I suppose I shall be dear Knight with him by and by.”

“ Dear Sir,” resumed Miss Wardour ; but, in-

interrupting herself, "I see the contents are unpleasant, sir—it will only vex you my reading them aloud."

"If you will allow me to know my own pleasure, Miss Wardour, I entreat you to go on—I presume, if it were unnecessary, I should not ask you to take the trouble."

"Having been of late taken into copartnery," continued Miss Wardour, reading the letter, "by Mr Gilbert Greenhorn, son of your late correspondent and man of business, Girmigo Greenhorn, Esq. writer to the signet, whose business I conducted as parliament-house clerk for many years, which business will in future be carried on under the firm of Greenhorn and Grinderson, (which I memorandum for the sake of accuracy in addressing your future letters,) and having had of late favours of yours, directed to my aforesaid partner, Gilbert Greenhorn, in consequence of his absence at the Lamberton races, have the honour to reply to your said favours."

"You see my friend is methodical, and commences by explaining the causes which have procured me so modest and elegant a correspondent—Go on—I can bear it."

And he laughed that bitter laugh which is perhaps the most fearful expression of mental misery. Trembling to proceed, and yet afraid to disobey, Miss Wardour continued to read: "I am, for my-

self and partner, sorry we cannot oblige you by looking out for the sums you mention, or applying for a suspension in the case of Goldiebird's bond, which would be more inconsistent, as we have been employed to act as the said Goldiebird's procurators and attornies, in which capacity we have taken out a charge of horning against you, as you must be aware by the schedule left by the messenger, for the sum of four thousand seven hundred and fifty-six pounds five shillings and sixpence one-fourth of a penny Sterling, which, with annual rent and expences effeiring, we presume will be settled, during the currency of the charge, to prevent further trouble. Same time, I am under the necessity to observe our own account, amounting to seven hundred and sixty-nine pounds ten shillings and sixpence, is also due, and settlement would be agreable; but as we hold your rights, title-deeds, and documents in hypothee, shall have no objection to give reasonable time—say till the next money term—I am, for myself and partner, concerned to add, that Mr Goldiebird's instructions to us are, to proceed *peremptorie* and *sine mora*, of which I have the pleasure to advise you to prevent future mistakes, reserving to ourselves otherwise to *agré* as accords. I am, for self and partner, dear sir, your obliged humble servant, Gabriel Grinderson, for Greenhorn and Grinderson."

“Ungrateful villain !” said Miss Wardour.

“Why, no ; it’s in the usual rule, I suppose ; the blow could not have been perfect if dealt by another hand—it’s all just as it should be,” answered the poor baronet, his affected composure sorely belied by his quivering lip and rolling eye—“But here’s a postscript I did not notice—come, finish the epistle.”

“I have to add, (not for self but partner) that Mr Greenhorn will accommodate you by taking your service of plate, or the bay horses, if sound in wind and limb, at a fair appreciation, in part payment of your accmpt.”

“G—d confound him !” said Sir Arthur, losing all command of himself at this condescending proposal ; “his grandfather shod my father’s horses, and this descendant of a scoundrelly blacksmith proposes to swindle me out of mine ! But I will write him a proper answer.”

And he sate down and began to write with great vehemence, then stopped and read aloud : “Mr Gilbert Greenhorn, in answer to two letters of a late date, I received a letter from a person calling himself Grinderson, and designing himself as your partner. When I address any one, I do not usually expect to be answered by deputy—I think I have been useful to your father, and friendly and civil to yourself, and therefore am now surprised—And yet,” said he, stopping short, “why

should I be surprised at that or anything else—or *why should I take up my time in writing to such a scoundrel?*—I sha’n’t be always kept in prison, I suppose, and to break that puppy’s bones when I get out shall be my first employment.”

“In prison, sir?” said Miss Wardour faintly.

“Ay, in prison, to be sure. Do you make any question about that?—Why, Mr what’s his name’s fine letter for self and partner seems to be thrown away on you, or else you have got four thousand so many hundred pounds, with the due proportion of shillings, pence, and half-pence, to pay that afore-said demand, as he calls it.”

“I, sir?—O if I had the means!—But where’s my brother?—Why does he not come, and so long in Scotland? He might do something to assist us.”

“Who, Reginald?—I suppose he’s gone with Mr Gilbert Greenhorn, or some such respectable person, to the Lamberton races—I have expected him this week past—but I cannot wonder that my children should neglect me as well as every other person. But I should beg your pardon, my love, who never either neglected or offended me in your life.”

And kissing her cheek as she threw her arms round his neck, he experienced that consolation which a parent feels even in the most distressed

state, in the assurance that he possesses the affection of a child.

Miss Wardour took the advantage of this revulsion of feeling to endeavour to sooth her father's mind to composure. She reminded him that he had many friends.

"I *had* many once," said Sir Arthur; "but of some I have exhausted their kindness with my frantic projects—others are unable to assist me—others are unwilling—it is all over with me—I only hope Reginald will take example by my folly."

"Should I not send to Monkbarns, sir?" said his daughter.

"To what purpose? He cannot lend me such a sum, and would not if he could, for he knows I am otherwise drowned in debt; and he would only give me scraps of misanthropy and quaint ends of Latin."

"But he is shrewd and sensible, and was bred to business, and, I am sure, always loved this family."

"Yes; I believe he did—it is a fine pass we are come to, when the affection of an Oldbuck is of consequence to a Wardour!—But when matters come to extremity, as I suppose they presently will—it may be as well to send for him.—And now go take your walk, my dear—my mind is more composed than when I had this cursed dis-

closure to make.—You know the worst, and may daily or hourly expect it. Go take your walk—I *would willingly be alone for a little while.*”

When Miss Wardour left the apartment, her first occupation was to avail herself of the half permission granted by her father, by dispatching to Monkbarns the messenger, who, as we have already seen, met the Antiquary and his nephew on the sea beach.

Little recking, and indeed scarce knowing, where she was wandering, chance directed her into the walk beneath the briary bank as it was called. A brook, which, in former days, had supplied the castle-moat with water, here descended through a narrow dell, up which Miss Wardour's taste had directed a natural path, which was rendered clean and easy, without the air of being formally made and preserved. It suited well the character of the little glen, which was overhung with thickets and underwood, chiefly of larch and hazel, intermixed with the usual varieties of the thorn and briar. In this walk had passed that scene of explanation between Miss Wardour and Lovel, which was overheard by old Edie Ochiltree. With a heart softened by the distress which approached her family, Miss Wardour now recalled every word and argument which Lovel had urged in support of his suit, and could not help confessing to herself, it was no small subject of pride to have inspired a young man

of his talents with a passion so strong and disinterested. That he should have left the pursuit of a profession in which he was said to be rapidly rising, *to bury himself in a disagreeable place like Fairport*, and brood over an unrequited passion, might be ridiculed by others as romantic, but was naturally forgiven as an excess of affection by the person who was the object of his attachment. Had he possessed an independence, however moderate, or ascertained a clear and undisputed claim to the rank in society he was well qualified to adorn, she might now have had it in her power to offer her father, during his misfortunes, an asylum in an establishment of her own. These thoughts, so favourable to the absent lover, crowded in one after the other with such a minute recapitulation of his words, looks, and actions, as plainly intimated that his former repulse had been dictated rather by duty than inclination. Isabella was musing alternately upon this subject, and upon that of her father's misfortunes, when, as the path winded round a little hillock, covered with brush-wood, the old Blue-gown suddenly met her.

With an air as if he had something important and mysterious to communicate, he doffed his bonnet, and assumed the cautious step and voice of one who would not willingly be overheard. "I haae been wishing muckle to meet wi' your leddyship—for ye ken I darena come to the house for Dousterswivel."

"I heard indeed," said Miss Wardour, dropping an alms into the bonnet, "I heard that you had done a very foolish if not a very bad thing, Edie, and I was sorry to hear it."

"Hout, my bonny ledly—fulish?—A' the warld's fules—and how should auld Edie Ochiltree be aye wise?—and for the evil—let them wha deal wi' Dousterswivel tell whether he gat a grain mair than his deserts."

"That may be true, Edie, and yet," said Miss Wardour, "you may have been very wrong."

"Weel, weel, we'se no dispute that e'ennow—it's about yoursel I'm gaun to speak—Div ye ken what's hanging ower the house o' Knockwinnock?"

"Great distress, I fear, Edie," answered Miss Wardour; "but I am surprised it is already so public."

"Public!—Sweepclean, the messenger, will be there the day wi' a' his tackle. I ken it frae ane o' his concurrents, as they ca' them, that's warned to meet him—and they'll be about their wark belive—whare they clip there needs nae kame—they sheer close aneugh."

"Are you sure this bad hour, Edie, is so very near?—come, I know, it will."

"It's e'en as I tell you, ledly; but dinna be cast down—there's a heaven ower your head here, as weel as in that fearful night atween the Ballyburghness and the Halket-head. D'ye think He,

wha rebuked the waters, canna protect you against the wrath of men, though they be armed with human authority?"

"It is, indeed, all we have to trust to."

"Yedinna ken—ye dinna ken—when the night's darkest, the dawn's nearest. If I had a gude horse, or could ride him when I had him, I reckon there wad be help yet.—I trusted to hae gotten a east wi' the Royal Charlotte, but she's coupit yonder, it's like, at Kittlebrig. There was a young gentleman on the box, and he behuved to drive; and Tam Sang, that suld hae had mair sense, he behuved to let him, and the daft callant couldna tak the turn at the corner o' the brig, and odd! he took the curb-stane, and he's whomled her as I wad whomle a toon bicker—it was a luck I hadna gotten on the tap o' her—Sae I came down atween hope and despair to see if ye wad send me on."

"And, Edie—where would ye go?"

"To Tannonburgh, my leddy," (which was the first stage from Fairport, but a good deal nearer to Knockwinnock,) "and that without delay—it's a' on your ain business."

"Our business, Edie! Alas! I give you all credit for your good meaning, but"—

"There's nae *but's* about it, my leddy, for gang I maun."

"But what is it that you would do at Tannonburgh?—or how can your going there benefit my father's affairs?"

“ Indeed, my sweet leddy, ye maun just trust that bit secret to auld Edie’s grey pow, and ask nae questions about it—Certainly if I wad hae wared my life for you yon night, I can hae nae reason to play an ill pliskie t’ye in the day o’ your distress.”

“ Well, Edie, follow me then,” said Miss Wardour ; “ and I will try to get you sent to Tannonburgh.”

“ Mak haste then, my bonny leddy, mak haste for the love o’ goodness !”—and he continued to exhort her to expedition until they reached the castle.

CHAPTER XIII.

Let those go see who will—I like it not—
For, say he was a slave to rank and pomp,
And all the nothings he is now divorced from
By the hard doom of stern necessity ;
Yet is it sad to mark his alter'd brow,
Where Vanity adjusts her flimsy veil
O'er the deep wrinkles of repentant anguish.

Old Play.

WHEN Miss Wardour arrived in the court of the castle, she was apprised by the first glance, that the visit of the officers of the law had already taken place. There was confusion, and gloom, and sorrow, and curiosity among the domestics, while the retainers of the law went from place to place, making an inventory of the goods and chattels falling under their distress, or poinding, as it is called in the law of Scotland. Captain M'Intyre flew to her, as, struck dumb with the melancholy conviction of her father's ruin, she paused upon the threshold of the gateway.

“ Dear Miss Wardour,” he said, “ do not make

yourself uneasy ; my uncle is coming immediately, and I am sure he will find some way to clear the house of these rascals."

" Alas ! Captain M'Intyre, I fear it will be too late."

" No," answered Edie, impatiently,—“ could I but get to Tannonburgh. In the name of heaven, Captain ! contrive some way to get me on, and ye'll do this poor ruined family the best day's doing that has been done them since Redhand's days—for as sure as e'er an auld saw came true, Knockwinnock house and land will be lost and won this day."

" Why, what good can you do, old man ?" said Hector.

But Robert, the domestic with whom Sir Arthur had been so much displeased in the morning, as if he had been watching for an opportunity to display his zeal, stepped hastily forward, and said to his mistress, “ If you please, ma'am, this auld man, Ochiltree, is very skeely and auld-farrant about mony things, as the diseases of cows, and horse, and sic like, and I am sure he disna want to be at Tannonburgh the day for naething, since he insists on't this gate ; and, if your leddyship pleases, I'll drive him there in the taxed cart in an hour's time.—I wad fain be of some use—I could bite my very tongue out when I think on this morning."

“ I am obliged to you, Robert,” said Miss Wardour ; “ and if you really think it has the least chance of being useful”——

“ In the name of God,” said the old man, “ yoke the cart, Robie, and if I am no o’ some use, less or mair, I’ll gie ye leave to fling me ower Kittlebrig as ye come back again. But O man, haste ye, for time’s precious this day.”

Robert looked at his mistress as she retired into the house, and seeing he was not prohibited, flew to the stable-yard, which was adjacent to the court, in order to yoke the carriage ; for, though an old beggar was the personage least likely to render effectual assistance in a case of pecuniary distress, yet there was among the common people of Edie’s circle, a general idea of his prudence and sagacity, which authorized Robert’s conclusion, that he would not so earnestly have urged the necessity of this expedition had he not been convinced of its utility. But so soon as the servant took hold of a horse to harness him for the tax-cart, an officer touched him on the shoulder—“ My friend, you must let that beast alone, he’s down in the schedule.”

“ What,” said Robert, “ am I not to take my master’s horse to go my young leddy’s errand ?”

“ You must remove nothing here,” said the man of office, “ or you will be liable for all consequences.”

“What the devil, sir,” said Hector, who, having followed to examine Ochiltree more closely on the nature of his hopes and expectations, already began to bristle like one of the terriers of his own native mountains, and sought but a decent pretext for venting his displeasure, “have you the impudence to prevent the young lady’s servant from obeying her orders?”

There was something in the air and tone of the young soldier, which seemed to argue that his interference was not likely to be confined to mere expostulation; and which, if it promised finally the advantages of a process of battery and deforcement, would certainly commence with the unpleasant circumstances necessary for founding such a complaint. The legal officer, confronted with him of the military, grasped with one doubtful hand the greasy bludgeon which was to enforce his authority, and with the other produced his short official baton, tipped with silver, and having a moveable ring upon it—“Captain M’Intyre.—Sir, I have no quarrel with you,—but if you interrupt me in my duty, I will break the wand of peace and declare myself deforced.”

“And who the devil cares,” said Hector, “whether you declare yourself divorced or married?—And as to breaking your wand, or breaking the peace, or whatever you call it, all I know is, that I

will break your bones if you prevent the lad from harnessing the horses to obey his mistress's orders."

"I take all who stand here to witness," said the messenger, "that I shewed him my blazon and explained my character.—He that will to Cupar maun to Cupar,"—and he slid his enigmatical ring from one end of the baton to the other, being the appropriate symbol of his having been forcibly interrupted in the discharge of his duty.

Honest Hector, better accustomed to the artillery of the field than to that of the law, saw this mystical ceremony with great indifference; and with like unconcern beheld the messenger sit down to write out an execution of deforcement. But at this moment, to prevent the well-meaning, hot-headed Highlander from running the risk of a severe penalty, the Antiquary arrived puffing and blowing, with his handkerchief crammed under his hat, and his wig upon the end of his stick.

"What the deuce is the matter here?" he exclaimed, hastily adjusting his head-gear; "I have been following you in fear of finding your idle loggerhead knocked against one rock or other, and here I find you parted with your Bucephalus, and quarrelling with Sweepclean. A messenger, Hector, is a worse foe than a *Phoca*, whether it be the *Phoca barbata*, or the *Phoca vitulina* of your late conflict."——

"D—n the phoca, sir," said Hector, "whether

it be the one or the other—I say d—n them both particularly!—I think you would not have me stand quietly by and see a scoundrel like this, because he calls himself a king’s messenger, forsooth—(I hope the king has many better for his meanest errands,) insult a young lady of family and fashion like Miss Wardour?”

“Rightly argued, Hector; but the king, like other people, has now and then shabby errands, and, in your ear, must have shabby fellows to do them. But even supposing you unacquainted with the statutes of William the Lion, in which *capite quarto, versu quinto*, this crime of deforcement is termed, *despectus Domini Regis*, a contempt, to wit, of the king himself, in whose name all legal diligence issues, could you not have inferred from the information I took so much pains to give you to-day, that those who interrupt officers who come to execute letters of caption, are *tanquam participes criminis rebellionis*; seeing that he who aids a rebel, is himself, *quodammodo*, an accessory to rebellion—but I’ll bring you out of the scrape.”

He then spoke to the messenger, who, upon his arrival, had laid aside all thoughts of making a good bye-job out of the deforcement, and accepted Mr Oldbuck’s assurances that the horse and taxed-cart should be safely returned in the course of two or three hours.

“Very well, sir,” said the Antiquary, “since you are disposed to be so civil, you shall have an-

other job in your own best way—a little cast of state politics—a crime punishable *per Legem Julianam*, Mr Sweepclean—Hark thee hither.”

And, after a whisper of five minutes, he gave him a slip of paper, on receiving which, the messenger mounted his horse, and, with one of his assistants, rode away pretty sharply. The fellow who remained seemed to delay his operations purposely, proceeded in the rest of his duty very slowly, and with the caution and precision of one who feels himself overlooked by a skilful and severe inspector.

In the meantime, Oldbuck taking his nephew by the arm led him into the house, and they were ushered into the presence of Sir Arthur Wardour, who, in a flutter between wounded pride, agonized apprehension, and vain attempts to disguise both under a show of indifference, exhibited a spectacle of painful interest.

“ Happy to see you, Mr Oldbuck—always happy to see my friends in fair weather or foul,” said the poor baronet, struggling not for composure, but for gaiety, an affectation which was strongly contrasted by the nervous and protracted grasp of his hand, and the agitation of his whole demeanour ; “ I am happy to see you—You are riding I see—I hope in this confusion your horses are taken good care of—I always like to have my friends’ horses looked after—Egad, they will have all my

care now, for you see they are like to leave me none of my own—he ! he ! he ! eh, Mr Oldbuck ?”

This attempt at a jest was attended by a hysterical giggle, which poor Sir Arthur intended should sound as an indifferent laugh.

“ You know I never ride, Sir Arthur,” said the Antiquary.

“ I beg your pardon ; but sure I saw your nephew arrive on horseback a short time since. We must look after officers’ horses, and his was a handsome grey charger, as I have seen.”

Sir Arthur was about to ring the bell, when Mr Oldbuck said, “ My nephew came on your own grey horse, Sir Arthur.”

“ Mine !” said the poor baronet, “ mine was it ? then the sun had been in my eyes—Well, I’m not worthy having a horse any longer, since I don’t know my own when I see him.”

“ Good Heaven,” thought Oldbuck, “ how is this man altered from the formal stolidity of his usual manner !—he grows wanton under adversity—*Sed pereunt mille figuræ*.”—He then proceeded aloud ; “ Sir Arthur, we must necessarily speak a little on business.”

“ To be sure,” said Sir Arthur ;—“ but it was so good that I should not know the horse I have ridden these five years, ha ! ha ! ha !”

“ Sir Arthur,” said the Antiquary, “ don’t let us waste time which is precious ; we shall have, I

hope, many better seasons for jesting—*desipere in loco* is the maxim of Horace;—I more than suspect this has been brought on by the villainy of Douterswivel.”

“ Don’t mention his name, sir !” said Sir Arthur, and his manner entirely changed from a fluttered affectation of gaiety to all the agitation of fury—his eyes sparkled, his mouth foamed, his hands were clenched ; “ don’t mention his name, sir,” he vociferated, “ unless you would see me go mad in your presence !—That I should have been such a miserable dolt—such an infatuated idiot—such a beast, endowed with thrice a beast’s stupidity, to be led and driven and spur-galled by such a rascal, and under such ridiculous pretences—Mr Oldbuck, I could tear myself when I think of it.”

“ I only meant to say,” answered the Antiquary, “ that this fellow is like to meet his reward ; and I cannot but think we shall frighten something out of him that may be of service to you—He has certainly had some unlawful correspondence on the other side of the water.”

“ Has he ?—has he ?—has he, indeed ?—then d—n the household goods, horses, and so forth—I will go to prison a happy man, Mr Oldbuck—I hope in Heaven there’s a reasonable chance of his being hanged ?”

“ Why, pretty fair,” said Oldbuck, willing to

encourage this diversion, in hopes it might mitigate the feelings which seemed like to upset the poor man's understanding ; "honest men have stretched a rope, or the law has been sadly cheated—But this unhappy business of your's—can nothing be done?—Let me see the charge."

He took the papers ; and, as he read them, his countenance grew hopelessly dark and disconsolate. Miss Wardour had by this time entered the apartment, and fixing her eyes on Mr Oldbuck, as if she meant to read her fate in his looks, easily perceived, from the change in his eye and the dropping of his nether-jaw, how little was to be hoped.

"We are then irremediably ruined, Mr Oldbuck?"

"Irremediably?—I hope not—but the instant demand is very large, and others will, doubtless, pour in."

"Ay, never doubt that, Monkbarns," said Sir Arthur ; "where the slaughter is, the eagles will be gathered together.—I am like a sheep which I have seen fall down a precipice, or drop down from sickness—if you had not seen a single raven or hooded crow for a fortnight before, he will not lie on the heather ten minutes before half a dozen will be picking out his eyes (and he drew his hand over his own), and tearing at his heart-strings before the poor devil has time to die. But that d—d

long-scented vulture that dogged me so long—you have got him fast, I hope?”

“Fast enough,” said the Antiquary; “the gentleman wished to take the wings of the morning, and bolt in the what d’ye call it,—the coach and four there. But he would have found twigs limed for him at Edinburgh. As it is, he never got so far, for the coach being overturned—as how could it go safe with such a Jonah?—he has had an infernal tumble, is carried *into* a cottage near Kittlebrig, and, to prevent all possibility of escape, I have sent your friend, Sweepclean, to carry him back to Fairport, *in nomine regis*, or to act as his sick-nurse at Kittlebrig, as is most fitting.—And now, Sir Arthur, permit me to have some conversation with you on the present unpleasant state of your affairs, that we may see what can be done for their extrication;” and the Antiquary led the way into the library, followed by the unfortunate gentleman.

They had been shut up together for about two hours, when Miss Wardour interrupted them with her cloak on, as if prepared for a journey. Her countenance was very pale, yet expressive of the composure which characterized her disposition.

“The messenger is returned, Mr Oldbuck.”

“Returned?—What, the devil! he has not let the fellow go?”

“No—I understand he has carried him to con-

finement ; and now he is returned to attend my father, and says he can wait no longer."

A loud wrangling was now heard on the staircase, in which the voice of Hector predominated. " You an officer, sir, and these ragamuffians a party ! a parcel of beggarly tailor fellows—tell yourselves off by nine, and we shall know your effective strength."

The grumbling voice of the man of law was then heard indistinctly muttering a reply, to which Hector retorted—" Come, come, sir, this won't do ; march your party, as you call them, out of this house directly, or I'll send you and them to the right about presently."

" The devil take Hector," said the Antiquary, hastening to the scene of action ; " his Highland blood is up again, and we shall have him fighting a duel with the bailiff—Come, Mr Sweepclean, you must give us a little time—I know you would not wish to hurry Sir Arthur."

" By no means, sir," said the messenger, putting his hat off, which he had thrown on to testify defiance of Captain M'Intyre's threats ; " but your nephew, sir, holds very uncivil language, and I have borne too much of it already ; and I am not justified in leaving my prisoner any longer after the instructions I received, unless I am to get payment of the sums contained in my diligence."—And he held out the caption, pointing with the

awful truncheon which he held in his right hand, to the formidable line of figures jotted upon the back thereof.

Hector, on the other hand, though silent from respect to his uncle, answered this gesture by shaking his clenched fist at the messenger with a frown of Highland wrath.

“ Foolish boy, be quiet,” said Oldbuck, “ and come with me into the room—the man is doing his miserable duty, and you will only make matters worse by opposing him.—I fear, Sir Arthur, you must accompany this man to Fairport ; there is no help for it in the first instance—I will accompany you to consult what farther can be done . My nephew will escort Miss Wardour to Monkbarns, which I hope she will make her residence until these unpleasant matters are settled.”

“ I go with my father, Mr Oldbuck—I have prepared his clothes and my own—I suppose we shall have the use of the carriage ?”

“ Anything in reason, madam,” said the messenger ; “ I have ordered it out, and it’s at the door—I will go on the box with the coachman—I have no desire to intrude—but two of the concur-rents must attend on horseback.”

“ I will attend too,” said Hector, and he ran down to secure a horse for himself.

“ We must go, then,” said the Antiquary.

“ To jail,” said the Baronet, sighing involunta-

rily ; “ and what of that ? ” he resumed in a tone affectedly cheerful—“ it is only a house we can’t get out of, after all—suppose a fit of the gout, and Knockwinnock would be the same—Ay, ay, Monk-barns, we’ll call it a fit of the gout without the d——d pain.”

But his eyes swelled with tears as he spoke, and his faltering accent marked how much this assumed gaiety cost him. The Antiquary wrung his hand, and, like the Indian Banians, who drive the real terms of an important bargain by signs, while they are apparently talking of indifferent matters, the hand of Sir Arthur, by its convulsive return of the grasp, expressed his sense of gratitude to his friend, and the real state of his internal agony. They stepped slowly down the magnificent staircase—every well-known object seeming to the unfortunate father and daughter to assume a more prominent and distinct appearance than usual, as if to press themselves on their notice for the last time.

At the first landing-place, Sir Arthur made an agonized pause : and, as he observed the Antiquary look at him anxiously, he said with assumed dignity—“ Yes, Mr Oldbuck, the descendant of an ancient line—the representative of Richard Redhand and Gamelyn de Guardover, may be pardoned a sigh when he leaves the castle of his fathers thus poorly escorted. When I was sent

to the Tower with my late father, in the year 1745, it was upon a charge becoming our birth—upon an accusation of high-treason, Mr Oldbuck,—we were escorted from Highgate by a troop of life-guards, and committed upon a secretary of state's warrant ; and now, here I am, in my old age, dragged from my household by a miserable creature like that, (pointing to the messenger), and for a paltry concern of pounds, shillings, and pence."

" At least," said Oldbuck, " you have now the company of a dutiful daughter, and a sincere friend, if you will permit me to say so, and that may be some consolation, even without the certainty that there can be no hanging, drawing, or quartering, on the present occasion.—But I hear that choleric boy as loud as ever. I hope to God he has got into no new broil !—it was an accursed chance that brought him here at all."

In fact, a sudden clamour, in which the loud voice and somewhat northern accent of Hector was again pre-eminently distinguished, broke off this conversation. The cause we must refer to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

Fortune, you say, flies from us—She but circles,
Like the fleet sea-bird round the fowler's skiff,—
Lost in the mist one moment, and the next
Brushing the white sail with her whiter wing,
As if to court the aim.—Experience watches,
And has her on the wheel.——

Old Play.

THE shout of triumph in Hector's warlike tones was not easily distinguished from that of battle. But as he rushed up stairs with a packet in his hand, exclaiming, "Long life to an old soldier! here comes Edie with a whole budget of good news!" it became obvious that his present cause of clamour was of an agreeable nature. He delivered the letter to Oldbuck, shook Sir Arthur heartily by the hand, and wished Miss Wardour joy, with all the frankness of Highland congratulation. The messenger, who had a kind of instinctive terror for Captain M'Intyre, drew towards his prisoner, keeping an eye of caution on the soldier's motions.

“Don’t suppose I shall trouble myself about you, you dirty fellow,” said the soldier; “there’s a guinea for the fright I have given you; and here comes an old *forty-two* man, who is a fitter match for you than I am.”

The messenger (one of those dogs who are not too scornful to eat dirty puddings,) caught in his hand the guinea which Hector chucked at his face; and abode warily and carefully the turn which matters were now to take. All voices meanwhile were loud in enquiries, which no one was in a hurry to answer.

“What is the matter, Captain M’Intyre?” said Sir Arthur.

“Ask old Edie,” said Hector; “I only know all’s safe and well.”

“What is all this, Edie?” said Miss Wardour to the mendicant.

“Your leddyship maun ask Monkbarns, for he has gotten the yepistolary correspondensh.”

“God save the king!” exclaimed the Antiquary, at the first glance of the contents of his packet, and, surprised at once out of decorum, philosophy, and phlegm, he skimmed his cocked-hat in the air, from which it descended not again, being caught in its fall by a branch of the chandelier. He next, looking joyously round, laid a grasp on his wig, which he perhaps would have sent after the beaver,

had not Edie stopped his hand, exclaiming, "Lord-sake! he's gaun gyte—mind Caxon's no here to repair the damage."

Every person now assailed the Antiquary, clamouring to know the cause of so sudden a transport, when, somewhat ashamed of his rapture, he fairly turned tail, like a fox at the cry of a pack of hounds, and ascending the stair by two steps at a time, gained the upper landing-place, where, turning round, he addressed the astonished audience as follows :—

"My good friends, *favete linguis*—To give you information, I must first, according to logicians, be possessed of it myself; and, therefore, with your leaves, I will retire into the library to examine these papers—Sir Arthur and Miss Wardour will have the goodness to step into the parlour—Mr Sweepclean, *secede paulisper*, or, in your own language, grant us a supersedere of diligence for five minutes—Hector, draw off your forces, and make your bear-garden flourish elsewhere—And, finally, be all of good cheer till my return, which will be *instantanter*."

The contents of the packet were indeed so little expected, that the Antiquary might be pardoned, first his ecstacy, and next his desire of delaying to communicate the intelligence they conveyed, until it was arranged and digested in his own mind.

Within the envelope was a letter addressed to

Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq. of Monkbarns, of the following purport :—

“ Dear Sir—to you, as my father’s proved and valued friend, I venture to address myself, being detained here by military duty of a very pressing nature. You must, by this time, be acquainted with the entangled state of our affairs ; and I know it will give you great pleasure to learn, that I am as fortunately as unexpectedly placed in a situation to give effectual assistance for extricating them. I understand Sir Arthur is threatened with severe measures by persons who acted formerly as his agents ; and, by advice of a creditable man of business here, I have procured the inclosed writing, which I understand will stop their proceedings, until their claim shall be legally discussed, and brought down to its proper amount. I also inclose bills to the amount of one thousand pounds to pay any other pressing demands, and request of your friendship to apply them according to your discretion. You will be surprised I give you this trouble, when it would seem more natural to address my father directly in his own affairs. But I have yet had no assurance that his eyes are opened to the character of a person against whom you have often, I know, warned him, and whose baneful influence has been the occasion of these distresses. And as I owe the means of relieving Sir Arthur to the generosity of a matchless friend, it is my duty to

take the most certain measures for the supplies being devoted to the purpose for which they were destined, and I know your wisdom and kindness will see that it is done. My friend, as he claims an interest in your regard, will explain some views of his own in the enclosed letter. The state of the post-office at Fairport being rather notorious, I must send this letter to Tannonburgh; but the old man Ochiltree, whom particuar circumstances have recommended as trustworthy, has information when the packet is likely to reach that place, and will take care to forward it. I expect to have soon an opportunity to apologize in person for the trouble I now give, and have the honour to be your very faithful servant—REGINALD GAMELYN WARDOUR. Edinburgh, 6th August, 179—.”

The Antiquary hastily broke the seal of the inclosure, the contents of which gave him equal surprise and pleasure. When he had in some measure composed himself after such unexpected tidings, he inspected the other papers carefully, which all related to business—put the bills into his pocket-book, and wrote a short acknowledgment to be dispatched by that day's post, for he was extremely methodical in money matters;—and, lastly, fraught with all the importance of disclosure, he descended to the parlour.

“ Sweepclean,” said he as he entered, to the officer who stood respectfully at the door, “ you must

sweep yourself clean out of Knockwinnock Castle with all your followers, tag-rag and bob-tail. See'st thou this paper, man?"

"A sist on a bill o' suspension," said the messenger, with a disappointed look; "I thought it would be a queer thing if ultimate diligence was to be done against sic a gentleman as Sir Arthur—Weel, sir, I'se go my ways with my party—And who's to pay my charges?"

"They who employed thee," replied Oldbuck, "as thou full well dost know. But here comes another express; this is a day of news, I think."

This was Mr Mailsetter on his mare from Fairport, with a letter for Sir Arthur, another to the messenger, both of which, he said, he was directed to forward instantly. The messenger opened his, observing, that Greenhorn and Grinderson were good enough men for his expences, and here was a letter from them desiring him to stop the diligence. Accordingly he immediately left the apartment, and staying no longer than to gather his posse together, he did then, in the phrase of Hector, who watched his departure as a jealous mastiff eyes the retreat of a repulsed beggar, evacuate Flanders.

Sir Arthur's letter was from Mr Greenhorn, and a curiosity in its way. We give it, with the worthy Baronet's comments.

"Sir—[Oh! I am *dear* sir no longer; folks are only dear to Messrs Greenhorn and Grinderson

when they are in adversity]—Sir, I am much concerned to learn, on my return from the country, where I was called on particular business, [a bet on the sweepstakes, I suppose,] that my partner had the impropriety, in my absence, to undertake the concerns of Messrs Goldiebirds in preference to yours, and had written to you in an unbecoming manner. I beg to make my most humble apology, as well as Mr Grinderson's—[come, I see he can write for himself and partner too,]—and trust it is impossible you can think me forgetful of, or ungrateful for, the constant patronage which my family [*his* family ! curse him for a puppy !] have uniformly experienced from that of Knockwinnock. I am sorry to find, from an interview I had this day with Mr Wardour, that he is much irritated, and, I must own, with apparent reason. But in order to remedy as much as in me lies the mistake of which he complains, [pretty mistake, indeed ! to clap his patron into jail,] I have sent this express to discharge all proceedings against your person or property ; and at the same time to transmit my respectful apology. I have only to add, that Mr Grinderson is of opinion, that, if restored to your confidence, he could point out circumstances connected with Messrs Goldiebird's present claim which would greatly reduce its amount [so, so, willing to play the rogue on either side] ; and that there is not the slightest hurry in settling the ba-

lance of your accompt with us ; and that I am for Mr G. as well as myself, Dear Sir, [O, aye, he has written himself into an approach to familiarity,] your much obliged, and most humble servant, GILBERT GREENHORN."

" Well said, Mr Gilbert Greenhorn," said Monk-barns ; " I see now there is some use in having two attornies in one firm. Their movements resemble those of the man and woman in a Dutch baby-house. When it is fair weather with the client, out comes the gentleman-partner to fawn like a spaniel ; when it is foul, forth bolts the operative brother to pin like a bull-dog—Well, I thank God, that my man of business still wears an equilateral cock'd hat, has a house in the Old Town, is as much afraid of a horse as I am myself, plays at golf of a Saturday, goes to the kirk of a Sunday, and, in respect he has no partner, hath only his own folly to apologize for."

" There are some writers very honest fellows," said Hector ; " I should like to hear any one say that my cousin, Donald M'Intyre, Strathtudlem's seventh son, (the other six are in the army,) is not as honest a fellow"——

" No doubt, no doubt, Hector, all the M'Intyres are so ; they have it by patent, man—But, I was going to say, that in a profession where unbounded trust is necessarily reposed, there is nothing surprising that fools should neglect it in their

idleness, and tricksters abuse it in their knavery— But it is the more to the honour of those, and I will vouch for many, who unite integrity with skill and attention, and walk honourably upright where there are so many pit-falls and stumbling-blocks for those of a different character. To such men their fellow-citizens may safely entrust the care of protecting their patrimonial rights, and their country the more sacred charge of her laws and privileges.”

“ They are best off, however, that hae least to do with them,” said Ochiltree, who had stretched his neck into the parlour door ; for the general confusion of the family not having yet subsided, the domestics, like waves after the fall of a hurricane, had not yet exactly regained their due limits, but were roaming wildly through the house.

“ Aha, old Truopenny, art thou there ?” said the Antiquary ; “ Sir Arthur, let me bring in the messenger of good luck, though he is but a lame one. You talked of the raven that scented out the slaughter from afar ; but here’s a blue pigeon (some-what of the oldest and toughest, I grant,) who smelled the good news six or seven miles off, flew chither in the taxed cart, and returned with the olive branch.”

“ Ye owe it a’ to puir Robie that drave me— puir fallow,” said the beggar, “ he doubts he’s in disgrace wi’ my leddy and Sir Arthur.”

Robert’s repentant and bashful face was seen over the mendicant’s shoulder.

“ In disgrace with me ?” said Sir Arthur—“ how so ?”—for the irritation into which he had worked himself on occasion of the toast had been long forgotten—“ O, I recollect—Robert, I was angry, and you were wrong—go about your work, and never answer a master that speaks to you in a passion.”

“ Nor any one else,” said the Antiquary ; “ for a soft answer turneth away wrath.”

“ And tell your mother, who is so ill with the rheumatism, to come down to the housekeeper to-morrow,” said Miss Wardour, “ and we will see what can be of service to her.”

“ God bless your leddyship,” said poor Robert, “ and his honour Sir Arthur, and the young laird, and the house of Knockwinnock in a’ its branches, far and near—it’s been a kind and a gude house to the puir this mony hundred years.”

“ There”—said the Antiquary to Sir Arthur—“ we won’t dispute—but there you see the gratitude of the poor people naturally turns to the civil virtues of your family. You don’t hear them talk of Red-hand, or Hell-in-Harness. For me, I must say, *Odi accipitrem qui semper vivit in armis*—so let us eat and drink in peace, and be joyful, Sir Knight.”

A table was quickly covered in the parlour, where the party sat joyously down to some refreshment. At the request of Oldbuck, Edie Ochiltree was permitted to sit by the sideboard in a great

leathern chair, which was placed in some measure behind a screen.

“ I accede to this the more readily,” said Sir Arthur, “ because I remember in my father’s days that chair was occupied by Ailshie Gourlay, who, for aught I know, was the last privileged fool or jester maintained by any family of distinction in Scotland.”

“ Aweel, Sir Arthur,” replied the beggar, who never hesitated an instant between his friend and his jest, “ mony a wise man sits in a fule’s seat, and mony a fule in a wise man’s, especially in families of distinction.”

Miss Wardour, fearing the effect of this speech (however worthy of Ailshie Gourlay, or any other privileged jester,) upon the nerves of her father, hastened to enquire whether ale or beef should not be distributed to the servants and people, whom the news had assembled around the castle.

“ Surely, my love,” said her father ; “ when was it ever otherwise in our families when a siege had been raised ?”

“ Ay, a siege laid by Saunders Sweepclean the bailiff, and raised by Edie Ochiltree the gaberlunzie, *par nobile fratrum*,” said Oldbuck, “ and well pitted against each other in respectability. But never mind, Sir Arthur—these are such sieges and such reliefs as our time of day admits of—and our escape is not less worth commemorating in a

glass of this excellent wine—Upon my credit, it is Burgundy, I think.”

“Were there any thing better in the cellar,” said Miss Wardour, “it would be all too little to regale you after your friendly exertions.”

“Say you so?” said the Antiquary—“why, then, a cup of thanks to you, my fair enemy, and soon may you be besieged as ladies love best to be, and sign terms of capitulation in the chapel of Saint Winnox.”

Miss Wardour blushed, Hector coloured, and then grew pale.

Sir Arthur answered, “My daughter is much obliged to you, Monkbarns; but unless you’ll accept her yourself, I really do not know where a poor knight’s daughter is to seek for an alliance in these mercenary times.”

“Mc, mean ye, Sir Arthur?—No, not I; I will claim the privilege of the duello, and, as being unable to encounter my fair enemy myself, I will appear by my champion—But of this matter hereafter.—What do you find in the papers there, Hector, that you hold your head down over them as if your nose were bleeding?”

“Nothing particular, sir; but only that, as my arm is now almost quite well, I think I will relieve you of my company in a day or two, and go to Edinburgh. I see Major Neville is arrived there, I should like to see him.”

“ Major whom ?”

“ Major Neville, sir.”

“ And who the devil is Major Neville ?”

“ O, Mr Oldbuck,” said Sir Arthur, “ you must remember his name frequently in the newspapers—a very distinguished young officer indeed. But I am happy to say that Mr M‘Intyre need not leave Monkbarns to see him, for my son writes that the Major is to come with him to Knockwinnock, and I need not say how happy I shall be to make the young gentlemen acquainted,—unless, indeed, they are known to each other already.”

“ No, not personally,” answered Hector, “ but I have had occasion to hear a good deal of him, and we have several mutual friends—your son being one of them.—But I must go ; for I see my uncle is beginning to grow tired of me, and I am afraid”——

“ That you will grow tired of him ?” interrupted Oldbuck,—“ I fear that’s past praying for. But you have forgot that the ecstastic twelfth of August approaches, and that you are engaged to meet one of Lord Glenallan’s gamekeepers, God knows where, to persecute the peaceful feathered creation.”

“ True, true, uncle—I had forgot that,” exclaimed the volatile Hector,—“ but you said something just now that put every thing out of my head.”

“ An’ it like your honours,” said old Edie, thrust-

ing his white head from behind the screen, where he had been plentifully regaling himself with ale and cold meat—"an' it like your honours, I can tell ye something that will keep the Captain wi' us amaist as weel as the pouting—Hear ye na the French are coming?"

"The French, you blockhead?" answered Oldbuck—"Bah!"

"I have not had time," said Sir Arthur Wardour, "to look over my lieutenancy correspondence for the week—indeed, I generally make a rule to read it only on Wednesdays, except in pressing cases, for I do every thing by method—but from the glance I took of my letters, I observed some alarm was entertained."

"Alarm?" said Edie,—“troth there's alarm, for the provost's gar'd the beacon light on the Halket-head be sorted up (that suld hae been sorted half a year syne,) in an unco hurry, and the council hae named nae less a man than auld Caxon himself to watch the light. Some say it was out o' compliment to Lieutenant Taffril, for it's ueist to certain that he'll marry Jenny Caxon—some say it's to please your honour and Monkbarns that wear wigs—and some say there's some auld story about a periwig that aue o' the baillies got and ne'er paid for—Ony way, there he is, sitting cockit up like a skart upon the tap o' the craig, to skirl when foul weather comes."

“ On mine honour, a pretty warder,” said Monkbarns ; “ and what’s my wig to do all the while ?”

“ I asked Caxon that very question,” answered Ochiltree, “ and he said he could look in ilka morning, and gie’t a touch afore he gaed to his bed, for there’s another man to watch in the day time, and Caxon says he’ll frizz your honour’s wig as weel sleeping as wauking.”

This news gave a different turn to the conversation, which ran upon national defence, and the duty of fighting for the land we live in, until it was time to part. The Antiquary and his nephew resumed their walk homeward, after parting from Knockwinnock with the warmest expressions of mutual regard, and an agreement to meet again as soon as possible.

CHAPTER XV.

Nay, if she love me not, I care not for her :
Shall I look pale because the maiden blooms ?
Or sigh because she smiles, and smiles on others ?
Not I, by Heaven !—I hold my peace too dear,
To let it, like the plume upon her cap,
Shake at each nod that her caprice shall dictate.

Old Play.

“ HECTOR,” said his uncle to Captain M‘Intyre in the course of their walk homeward, “ I am sometimes inclined to suspect that, in one respect, you are a fool.”

“ If you only think me so in *one* respect, sir, I am sure you do me more grace than I expected or deserve.”

“ I mean in one particular, *par excellence*. I have sometimes thought that you have cast your eyes upon Miss Wardour.”

“ Well, sir.”

“ Well, sir ! deuce take the fellow, he answers me as if it were the most reasonable thing in the world, that he, a captain in the army, and nothing

at all besides, should marry the daughter of a baronet."

"I presume to think, sir, there would be no degradation on Miss Wardour's part in point of family."

"O Heaven forbid we should come on that topic!—no, no, equal both—both on the table-land of gentility, and qualified to look down on every *roturier* in Scotland."

"And in point of fortune we are pretty even, since neither of us have got any," continued Hector. "There may be an error, but I cannot plead guilty to presumption."

"But here lies the error, then, if you call it so," replied his uncle; "she won't have you, Hector."

"Indeed, sir!"

"It is very sure, Hector: and to make it double sure, I must inform you that she likes another man. She misunderstood some words I once said to her, and I have since been able to guess at the interpretation she put upon them. At the time, I was unable to account for her hesitation and blushing; but, my poor Hector, I now understand them as a death-signal to your hopes and pretensions—So I advise you to beat your retreat, and draw off your forces as well as you can, for the fort is too well garrisoned for you to storm it."

"I have no occasion to beat any retreat, uncle," said Hector, holding himself very upright, and

marching with a sort of dogged and offended solemnity ; “ no man needs to retreat that has never advanced. There are women in Scotland besides Miss Wardour, of as good family”——

“ And better taste,” said his uncle ; “ doubtless there are, Hector ; and though I cannot say but that she is one of the most accomplished as well as sensible girls I have seen, yet I doubt much of her merit would be cast away on you. A showy figure, now, with two cross feathers in her noddle—one green, one blue ; who would wear a riding-habit of the regimental complexion, drive a gig one day, and the next review the regiment on the grey trotting poney which dragged that vehicle, *hoc erat in votis*—These are the qualities that would subdue you, especially if she had a taste for natural history, and loved a specimen of a *phoca*.”

“ It’s a little hard, sir, I must have that cursed seal thrown into my face on all occasions—but I care little about it—and I shall not break my heart for Miss Wardour. She is free to chuse for herself, and I wish her all happiness.”

“ Magnanimously resolved, thou prop of Troy ! Why, Hector, I was afraid of a scene—Your sister told me you were desperately in love with Miss Wardour.”

“ Sir, you would not have me desperately in love with a woman that does not care about me ?”

“ Well, nephew,” said the Antiquary more seriously, “ there is doubtless much sense in what you say ; yet I would have given a great deal, some twenty or twenty-five years since, to have been able to think as you do.”

“ Any body, I suppose, may think as they please on such subjects,” said Hector.

“ Not according to the old school,” said Oldbuck ; “ but, as I said before, the practice of the modern seems in this case the most prudential, though, I think, scarcely the most interesting. But tell me your ideas now on this prevailing subject of an invasion.—The cry is still, They come.”

Hector, swallowing his mortification, which he was peculiarly anxious to conceal from his uncle’s satirical observation, readily entered into a conversation which was to turn the Antiquary’s thoughts from Miss Wardour and the seal. When they reached Monkbarns, the communicating to the ladies the events which had taken place at the castle, with the counter-information of how long dinner had waited before the womankind had ventured to eat it in the Antiquary’s absence, averted these delicate topics of discussion.

The next morning the Antiquary arose early, and, as Caxon had not yet made his appearance, he began mentally to feel the absence of the petty news and small talk, of which the ex-peruquier was a faithful reporter, and which habit had made

as necessary to the Antiquary as his occasional pinch of snuff, although he held, or affected to hold, both to be of the same intrinsic value. The feeling of vacuity peculiar to such a deprivation was alleviated by the appearance of old Ochiltree, sauntering beside the clipped yew and holly hedges, with the air of a person quite at home. Indeed, so familiar had he been of late, that even Juno did not bark at him, but contented herself with watching him with a close and vigilant eye. Our Antiquary stepped out in his night-gown, and instantly received and returned his greeting.

“ They are coming now, in good earnest, Monk-barns—I just cam frae F’airport to bring ye the news, and then I’ll step away back again—the Search has just come into the bay, and they say she’s been chased by a French fleet.”

“ The Search ?” said Oldbuck, reflecting a moment. “ Oho !”

“ Ay, ay, Captain Taffril’s gun-brig, the Search.”

“ What ! any relation to *Search No. II* ?”

The mendicant, like a man detected in a frolic, put his bonnet before his face, yet could not help laughing heartily.—“ ‘The de’il’s in you, Monk-barns, for garring odds and evens meet—Wha thought ye wad hae laid that and that thegither ?—Odd, I am clean catched now.”

“ I see it all,” said Oldbuck, “ as plain as the legend on a medal of high preservation—the box

in which the bullion was found belonged to the gun-brig, and the treasure to my phoenix?"—(Eddie nodded assent.)—"And was buried there that Sir Arthur might receive relief in his difficulties."

"By me," said Eddie, "and twa of the brig's men—But they didna ken its contents; and thought it some bit smuggling concern o' the Captain's. I watched day and night till I saw it in the right hand; and then, when that German deevil was glowering at the lid o' the kist, (they liked mutton weel that licket whare the yowe lay), I think some Scottish deevil put it into my head to play him youither cantrip—Now, ye see, if I had said mair or less to Baillie Littlejohn, I behoved till hae come out wi' a' this story; and vexed wad Mr Lovel hae been to have it brought to light—sae I thought I would stand to onything rather than that."

"I must say he has chosen his confidant well, though somewhat strangely."

"I'll say this for mysel, Monkbarns," answered the mendicant, "that I am the fittest man in the hale country to trust wi' siller, for I neither want it, nor wish for it, nor could use it if I had it. But the lad hadna muckle choice in the matter, for he thought he was leaving the country for ever (I trust he's mista'en in that though); and the night was set in when we learned, by a strange chance, Sir Arthur's sair distress, and Lovel was obliged

to be on board as the day dawned. But five nights afterwards the brig stood into the bay, and I met the boat by appointment, and we buried the treasure where ye fand it."

"This was a very romantic, foolish exploit," said Oldbuck—"Why not trust me or any other friend?"

"The blood o' your sister's son," replied Edie, "was on his hands, and him maybe dead outright—what time had he to take counsel?—or how could he ask it at you, by ony body?"

"You are right.—But what if Dousterswivel had come before you?"

"There was little fear o' his coming there without Sir Arthur—he had gotten a sair gliff the night afore, and never intended to look near the place again, unless he had been brought there sting and ling—He kenn'd weel the first pose was o' his ain hiding, and how could he expect a second? He just havered on about it to make the mair o' Sir Arthur."

"Then how," said Oldbuck, "should Sir Arthur have come there unless the German had brought him?"

"Umph!" answered Edie drily, "I had a story about Misticoat wad hae brought him forty miles, or you either. Besides, it was to be thought he would be for visiting the place he fand the first siller in—he kenn'd na the secret o' that job. In

short, the siller being in this shape, Sir Arthur in utter difficulties, and Lovel determined he should never ken the hand that helped him,—for that was what he insisted maist upon,—we couldna think of a better way to fling the gear in his gate, though we simmered it and wintered it e'er sae lang. And if by ony queer mischance Doustercivil had got his claws on't, I was instantly to hae informed you or the Sheriff o' the haill story."

"Well, notwithstanding all these wise precautions, I think your contrivance succeeded better than such a clumsy one deserved, Edie. But how the deuce came Lovel by such a mass of silver ingots?"

"That's just what I canna tell ye—But they were put on board wi' his things at Fairport, it's like, and we stowed them into ane o' the ammunition-boxes o' the brig, baith for concealment and convenience of carriage."

"Lord!" said Oldbuck, his recollection recurring to the earlier part of his acquaintance with Lovel; "and this young fellow, who was putting hundreds on so strange a hazard, I must be recommending a subscription to him, and paying his bill at the Ferry! I never will pay any person's bill again, that's certain.—And you kept up a constant correspondence with Lovel, I suppose?"

"I just gat ae bit scrape o' a pen frae him, to say there wad, as yesterday fell, be a packet at

Tannonburgh, wi' letters o' great consequence to the Knockwinnock folk ; for they jaloused the opening of our letters at Fairport.—And that's as true, I hear Mrs Mailsetter is to lose her office for looking after ither folk's business and neglecting her ain."

" And what do you expect, now, Edie, for being the adviser, and messenger, and guard, and confidential person in all these matters ?"

" De'il hae't do I expect—excepting that a' the gentles will come to the gaberlunzie's burial ; and maybe ye'll carry the head yoursel, as ye did puir Steenie Mucklebackit's.—What trouble was't to me ? I was ganging about at ony rate—O but I was blythe when I got out of prison, though ; for I thought, what if that weary letter should come when I am closed up here like an oyster, and a' should gang wrang for want o't ; and whiles I thought I maun make a clean breast and tell you a' about it ; but then I couldna weel do that without contravening Mr Lovel's positive orders ; and I reckon he had to see somebody at Edinburgh afore he could do what he wussed to do for Sir Arthur and his family."

" Well, and to your public news, Edie—So they are still coming, are they ?"

" Troth, they say sae, sir ; and there's come down strict orders for the forces and volunteers to be alert ; and there's a clever young officer to come

here forthwith, to look at our means o' defence—I saw the Baillic's lass cleaning his belts and white breeks—I gae her a hand, for ye maun think she wasna ower clever at it, and sae I gat a' the news for my pains."

"And what think you, as an old soldier?"

"Troth, I kenna—an' they come sae mony as they speak o', they'll be odds against us—But there's mony yauld chields amang thae volunteers; and I maunna say muckle about them that's no weel and no very able, because I am something that gate mysel—But we'se do our best."

"What! so your martial spirit is rising again, Edie?"

'Even in our ashes glow their wonted fires!'

I would not have thought you, Edie, had so much to fight for?"

"Me no muckle to fight for, sir?—isna there the country to fight for, and the burnsides that I gang daundering beside, and the hearths o' the gudewives that gie me my bit bread, and the bits o' weans that come toddling to play wi' me when I come about a landward town?—De'il!" he continued, grasping his pikestaff with great emphasis, "an' I had as gude pith as I hae gude-will, and a gude cause, I should gie some o' them a day's kemping."

“ Bravo, bravo, Edie ! The country’s in little ultimate danger, when the beggar’s as ready to fight for his dish as the laird for his land.”

Their further conversation reverted to the particulars of the night passed by the mendicant and Lovel in the ruins of St Ruth ; by the details of which the Antiquary was highly amused.

“ I would have given a guinea,” he said, “ to have seen the scoundrelly German under the agonies of those terrors, which it is part of his own quackery to inspire into others ; and trembling alternately for the fury of his patron, and the apparition of some hobgoblin.”

“ Troth,” said the beggar, “ there was time for him to be cowed ; “ for ye wad hae thought the very spirit of Hell-in-Harness had taken possession o’ the body o’ Sir Arthur.—But what will come o’ the land-louper ?”

“ I have had a letter this morning, from which I understand he has acquitted you of the charge he brought against you, and offers to make such discoveries as will render the settlement of Sir Arthur’s affairs a more easy task than we apprehended—So writes the Sheriff ; and adds, that he has given some private information of importance to government. In consideration of which, I understand he will be sent back to play the knave in his own country.”

“ And a’ the bonny engines, and wheels, and

the coves, and sheughs, down at Glenwithershins yonder, what's to come o' them?" said Edie.

"I hope the men, before they are dispersed, will make a bonfire of their gim-cracks, as an army destroy their artillery when forced to raise a siege. And as for the holes, Edie, I abandon them as rat-traps, for the benefit of the next wise men who may chuse to drop the substance to snatch at a shadow."

"Hegh, sirs! guide us a'! to burn the engines? that's a great waste—Had ye na better try to get back part o' your hundred pounds wi' the sale o' the materials?" he continued with a tone of affected condolence.

"Not a farthing," said the Antiquary peevishly; taking a turn from him, and making a step or two away. Then returning, half-siniling at his own pettishness, he said, "Get thee into the house, Edie, and remember my counsel: never speak to me about a mine, or to my nephew, Hector, about a *phoca*, that is a sealgh, as you call it."

"I maun be ganging my ways back to Fairport," said the wanderer; "I want to see what they're saying there about the invasion—but I'll mind what your honour says, no to speak to you about a sealgh, or to the Captain about the hundred pounds that you gied to Douster"——

"Confound thee!—I desired thee not to mention that to me."——

“ Dear me !” said Edie, with affected surprise ; “ weel, I thought there was naething but what your honour could hae studden in the way o’ agreeable conversation, unless it was about the Prætorian yonder, or the boddle that the packman sauld to ye for an auld coin.”

“ Pshaw, pshaw,” said the Antiquary, turning from him hastily, and retreating into the house.

The mendicant looked after him a moment, and with a chuckling laugh, such as that with which a magpie or parrot applauds a successful exploit of mischief, he resumed once more the road to Fairport. His habits had given him a sort of restlessness, much increased by the pleasure he took in gathering news ; and in a short time he had regained the town which he left in the morning, for no reason that he knew himself, unless just to “ hae a bit crack wi’ Monk barns.”

CHAPTER XVI.

Red glared the beacon on Pownell,
On Skiddaw there were three ;
The bugle-horn on moor and fell
Was heard continually.

JAMES HOGG.

THE watch, who kept his watch on the hill, and looked toward Birnam, probably conceived himself dreaming when he first beheld the fated grove put itself into motion for its march to Dunsinane. Even so, old Caxon, as, perched in his hut, he qualified his thoughts upon the approaching marriage of his daughter, and the dignity of being father-in-law to Lieutenant Taffril, with an occasional peep towards the signal-post with which his own corresponded, was not a little surprised by observing a light in that direction. He rubbed his eyes, looked again, adjusting his observation by a cross-staff which had been placed so as to bear upon the point. And behold, the light increased, like a comet to the eye of the astronomer, “ with fear of change perplexing nations.”

“The Lord preserve us!” said Caxon, “what’s to be done now?—But there will be wiser heads than mine to look to that, sae I’sc e’en fire the beacon.”

And he lighted the beacon accordingly, which threw up to the sky a long wavering train of light, startling the sea-fowl from their nests, and reflected far beneath by the reddening billows of the sea. The brother warders of Caxon being equally diligent, caught and repeated his signal. The lights glanced on headlands and capes and inland hills, and the whole district was alarmed by the signal of invasion.

Our Antiquary, his head wrapped warm in two double night-caps, was quietly enjoying his repose, when it was suddenly broken by the screams of his sister, his niece, and two maid servants.

“What the devil is the matter?” said he, starting up in his bed,—“womankind in my room at this hour of night!—are ye all mad?”

“The beacon, uncle,” said Miss M-Intyre—

“The French coming to murder us!” screamed Miss Griselda.

“The beacon, the beacon!—the French, the French!—murder, murder! and waur than murder!”—cried the two handmaidens like the chorus of an opera.

“The French?” said Oldbuck, starting up,—
“get out of the room, womankind that you are,

till I get my things on—And, hark ye, bring me my sword.”

“ Whilk o’ them, Monkbarns ?” cried his sister, offering a Roman faulchion of brass with the one hand, with the other an Andrea Ferrara without a handle.

“ The langest, the langest,” cried Jenny Rintherout, dragging in a two-handed sword of the twelfth century.

“ Womankind,” said Oldbuck, in great agitation, “ be composed, and do not give way to vain terror—Are you sure they are come ?”

“ Sure !—sure !” exclaimed Jenny,—“ ower sure !—a’ the sea fencibles, and the land fencibles, and the volunteers and yeomanry, are on fit, and driving to Fairport as hard as horse and man can gang—and auld Mucklebackit’s gane wi’ the lave—muckle good he’ll do !—Hegh, sirs ! *he’ll* be missed the morn wha wad hae served king and country weel !”

“ Give me,” said Oldbuck, “ the sword which my father wore in the year forty-five—it hath no belt or baldrick—but we’ll make shift.”

So saying, he thrust the weapon through the cover of his breeches pocket. At this moment Hector entered, who had been to a neighbouring height to ascertain whether the alarm was actual.

“ Where are your arms, nephew ?” exclaimed Oldbuck—“ where is your double-barrelled gun,

that was never out of your hand when there was no occasion for such vanities?"

"Pooh! pooh! sir," said Hector, "who ever took a fowling-piece on action?—I have got my uniform on, you see—I hope I will be of more use if they will give me a command, than I could be with ten double-barrels.—And you, sir, must get to Fairport, to give directions for the quartering and maintaining the men and horses, and preventing confusion."

"You are right, Hector,—I believe I shall do as much with my head as my hand too—But here comes Sir Arthur Wardour, who, between ourselves, is not fit to accomplish much either one way or other."

Sir Arthur was probably of a different opinion; for, dressed in his lieutenancy uniform, he was also on the road to Fairport, and called in his way to take Mr Oldbuck with him, having had his original opinion of his sagacity much confirmed by late events. And in spite of all the entreaties of the womankind that the Antiquary would stay to garrison Monkbarns, Mr Oldbuck, with his nephew, instantly accepted Sir Arthur's offer.

Those who have witnessed such a scene can alone conceive the state of bustle in Fairport. The windows were glancing with a hundred lights, which, appearing and disappearing rapidly, indicated the

confusion within doors. The women of lower rank assembled and clamoured in the streets. The yeomanry, pouring from their different glens, galloped through the streets, some individually, some in parties of five or six as they had met on the road. The drums and fifes of the volunteers beating to arms, were blended with the voice of the officers, the sound of the bugles, and the tolling of the bells from the steeple. The ships in the harbour were lit up, and boats from the armed vessels added to the bustle, by landing men and guns, destined to assist in the defence of the place. This part of the preparations was superintended by Taffril with much activity. Two or three light vessels had already slipped their cables and stood out to sea, in order to discover the supposed enemy.

Such was the scene of general confusion, when Sir Arthur Wardour, Oldbuck, and Hector, made their way with difficulty into the principal square, where the town-house is situated. It was lighted up, and the magistracy, with many of the neighbouring gentlemen, were assembled. And here, as upon other occasions of the like kind in Scotland, it was remarkable how the good sense and firmness of the people supplied almost all the deficiencies of inexperience. The magistrates were beset by the quarter-masters of the different corps for billets for their men and horses.

“ Let us,” said Baillie Littlejohn, “ take the horses into our warehouses, and the men into our parlours,—share our supper with the one, and our forage with the other. We have made ourselves wealthy under a free and paternal government, and now is the time to show we know its value.”

A loud and cheerful acquiescence was given by all present, and the substance of the wealthy, with the persons of those of all ranks, were unanimously devoted to the defence of the country.

Captain M’Intyre acted upon this occasion as military adviser and aid-de-camp to the principal magistrate, and displayed a degree of presence of mind, and knowledge of his profession, totally unexpected by his uncle, who, recollecting his usual *insouciance* and impetuosity, gazed at him with astonishment from time to time, as he remarked the calm and steady manner in which he explained the various measures of precaution that his experience suggested, and gave directions for executing them. He found the different corps in good order, considering the irregular materials of which they were composed, in great force of numbers, and high confidence and spirits. And so much did military experience at that moment overbalance all other claims to consequence, that even old Edie, instead of being left, like Diogenes at Sinope, to roll his tub when all around were preparing for de-

fence, had the duty assigned him of superintending the serving out of the ammunition, which he executed with much discretion.

Two things were still anxiously expected—the presence of the Glenallan volunteers, who, in consideration of the importance of that family, had been formed into a separate corps, and the arrival of the officer before announced, to whom the measures of defence on that coast had been committed by the commander-in-chief, and whose commission would entitle him to take upon himself the full disposal of the military force.

At length the bugles of the Glenallan yeomanry were heard, and the Earl himself, to the surprise of all who knew his habits and state of health, appeared at their head in uniform. They formed a very handsome and well-mounted squadron, formed entirely out of the Earl's lowland tenants, and were followed by a regiment of five hundred men, completely equipped with the Highland dress, whom he had brought down from the upland glens, with their pipes playing in the van. The clean and serviceable appearance of this band of feudal dependants called forth the admiration of Captain M'Intyre; but his uncle was still more struck by the manner in which, upon this crisis, the ancient military spirit of his house seemed to animate and invigorate the decayed frame of the Earl, their leader. He claimed, and obtained for himself and his

followers, the post most likely to be that of danger, displayed great alacrity in making the necessary dispositions, and shewed equal acuteness in discussing their propriety. Morning broke in upon the military councils of Fairport, while all concerned were still eagerly engaged in taking precautions for their defence.

At length a cry among the people announced, "There's the brave Major Neville come at last, with another officer;" and their post-chaise and four drove into the square, amidst the huzzas of the volunteers and inhabitants. The magistrates, with their assessors of the lieutenancy, hastened to the door of their town-house to receive him; but what was the surprise of all present, but most especially that of the Antiquary, when they became aware, that the handsome uniform and military cap disclosed the person and features of the *pacific Lovel*! A warm embrace, and a hearty shake of the hand, were necessary to assure him that his eyes were doing him justice. Sir Arthur was no less surprised to recognise his son, Captain Wardour, in Lovel's, or rather Major Neville's company. The first words of the young officers were a positive assurance to all present, that the courage and zeal which they had displayed were entirely thrown away, unless in so far as they afforded an acceptable proof of their spirit and promptitude.

“The watchman at Halket-head,” said Major Neville, “as we discovered by an investigation which we made in our route hither, was most naturally misled by a bon-fire which some idle people had made on the hill above Glenwithershins, just in the line of the beacon with which his corresponded.”

Oldbuck gave a conscious look to Sir Arthur, who returned it with one equally sheepish, and a shrug of the shoulders.

“It must have been the machinery which we condemned to the flames in our wrath,” said the Antiquary, plucking up heart, though not a little ashamed of having been the cause of so much disturbance—“the devil take Dousterswivel with all my heart!—I think he has bequeathed us a legacy of blunders and mischief, as if he had lighted some train of fireworks at his departure—I wonder what cracker will go off next among our shins.—But yonder comes the prudent Caxon.—Hold up your head, you ass—your betters must bear the blame for you—And here, take this what-d’ye-call-it”—(giving him his sword)—“I wonder what I would have said yesterday to any man, that would have told me I was to stick such an appendage to my tail.”

Here he found his arm gently pressed by Lord Glenallan, who dragged him into a separate apart-

ment. "For God's sake, who is that young gentleman who is so strikingly like"——

"Like the unfortunate Eveline," interrupted Oldbuck. "I felt my heart warm to him from the first, and your lordship has suggested the very cause."

"But who—who is he?" continued Lord Glenallan, holding the Antiquary with a convulsive grasp.

"Formerly I would have called him Lovel, but now he turns out to be Major Neville."

"Whom my brother brought up as his natural son—whom he made his heir—Gracious Heaven! the child of my Eveline!"

"Hold, my lord—hold!" said Oldbuck, "do not give too hasty way to such a presumption—what probability is there?"

"Probability? none! There is certainty! absolute certainty. The agent I mentioned to you wrote me the whole story—I received it yesterday, not sooner—Bring him, for God's sake, that a father's eyes may bless him before he departs."

"I will; but, for your own sake and his, give him a few moments for preparation."

And, determined to make still farther investigation before yielding his entire conviction to so strange a tale, he sought out Major Neville, and found him expediting the necessary measures for dispersing the force which had been assembled.

“ Pray, Major Neville, leave this business for a moment to Captain Wardour and to Hector, with whom, I hope, you are thoroughly reconciled, (Neville laughed, and shook hands with Hector across the table,) and grant me a moment’s audience.”

“ You have a claim on me, Mr Oldbuck, were my business more urgent,” said Neville, “ for having passed myself upon you under a false name, and rewarding your hospitality by injuring your nephew.”

“ You served him as he deserved,” said Oldbuck ; “ though, by the way, he shewed as much good sense as spirit to-day—Egad, if he would rub up his learning, and read Cæsar and Polybius, and the *Stratagemata Polyæni*, I think he would rise in the army, and I will certainly lend him a lift.”

“ He is heartily deserving of it,” said Neville ; “ and I am glad you excuse me, which you may do the more frankly, when you know that I am so unfortunate as to have no better right to the name of Neville, by which I have been generally distinguished, than to that of Lovel, under which you knew me.”

“ Indeed ! then, I trust, we shall find out one for you to which you shall have a firm and legal title.”

“ Sir !—I trust you do not think the misfortune of my birth a fit subject”——

“ By no means, young man,” answered the An-

tiquary, interrupting him,—“ I believe I know more of your birth than you do yourself—and, to convince you of it, you were educated and known as a natural son of Geraldin Neville of Neville'sburgh, in Yorkshire, and, I presume, as his destined heir ?”

“ Pardon me—no such views were held out to me ; I was liberally educated, and pushed forward in the army by money and interest ; but I believe my supposed father long entertained some ideas of marriage, though he never carried them into effect.”

“ You say your *supposed* father ?—What leads you to suppose Mr Geraldin Neville was not your real father ?”

“ I know, Mr Oldbuck, that you would not ask these questions on a point of such delicacy for the gratification of idle curiosity. I will, therefore, tell you candidly, that last year, while we occupied a small town in French-Flanders, I found in a convent, near which I was quartered, a woman who spoke remarkably good English—She was a Spaniard—her name Teresa D'Acunha. In the process of our acquaintance, she discovered who I was, and made herself known to me as the person who had charge of my infancy. She dropped more than one hint of rank to which I was entitled, and of injustice done to me, promising a more full disclosure in case of the death of a lady in Scotland,

during whose lifetime she was determined to keep the secret. She also intimated that Mr Geraldin Neville was not my father. We were attacked by the enemy, and driven from the town, which was pillaged with savage ferocity by the republicans. The religious orders were the particular objects of their hate and cruelty. The convent was burned, and several nuns perished, among others Teresa—and with her all chance of knowing the story of my birth—tragic by all accounts it must have been.”

“ *Raro antecedentem scelestum*, or, as I may here say, *scelestam*,” said Oldbuck, “ *deseruit pœna*—even Epicureans admitted that—and what did you do upon this?”

“ I remonstrated with Mr Neville by letter, and to no purpose—I then obtained leave of absence, and threw myself at his feet, conjuring him to complete the disclosure which Teresa had begun. He refused, and, on my importunity, indignantly upbraided me with the favours he had already conferred; I thought he abused the power of a benefactor, as he was compelled to admit he had no title to that of a father, and we parted in mutual displeasure. I renounced the name of Neville, and assumed that under which you knew me.—It was at this time, when residing with a friend in the north of England who favoured my disguise, that I became acquainted with Miss War-

dour, and was romantic enough to follow her to Scotland. My mind wavered on various plans of life, when I resolved to apply once more to Mr Neville for an explanation of the mystery of my birth. It was long ere I received an answer ; you were present when it was put into my hands. He informed me of his bad state of health, and conjured me, for my own sake, to enquire no farther into the nature of his connection with me, but to rest satisfied with his declaring it to be such and so intimate, that he designed to constitute me his heir. When I was preparing to leave Fairport to join him, a second express brought me word that he was no more. The possession of great wealth was unable to suppress the remorseful feelings with which I now regarded my conduct to my benefactor, and some hints in his letter appearing to intimate that there was on my birth a deeper stain than that of ordinary illegitimacy, I remembered certain prejudices of Sir Arthur."

" And you brooded over these melancholy ideas until you were ill, instead of coming to me for advice, and telling me the whole story ?" said Oldbuck.

" Exactly ; then came my quarrel with Captain M'Intyre, and my compelled departure from Fairport and its vicinity."

" From love and from poetry—Miss Wardour and the Caledoniad."

“ Most true.”

“ And since that time you have been occupied, I suppose, with plans for Sir Arthur’s relief ?”

“ Yes, sir ; with the assistance of Captain War-dour at Edinburgh.”

“ And Edie Ochiltree here—you see I know the whole story. But how came you by this treasure ?”

“ It was a quantity of plate which had belonged to my uncle, and was left in the custody of a person at Fairport. Sometime before his death he had sent orders that it should be melted down. He perhaps did not wish me to see the Glenallan arms upon it.”

“ Well, Major Neville, or—let me say—Lovel, being the name in which I rather delight, you must, I believe, exchange both of your *alias*’s for the style and title of the Honourable William Geraldin, commonly called Lord Geraldin.”

The Antiquary then went through the strange and melancholy circumstances concerning his mother’s death.

“ I have no doubt,” he said, “ that your uncle wished the report to be believed, that the child of this unhappy marriage was no more—perhaps he might himself have an eye to the inheritance of his brother—he was then a gay wild young man—But of all intentions against your person, however much the evil conscience of Elspeth might lead

her to suspect him from the agitation in which he appeared, Teresa's story and your own fully acquit him. And now, my dear sir, let me have the pleasure of introducing a son to a father."

We will not attempt to describe such a meeting. The proofs on all sides were found to be complete, for Mr Neville had left a distinct account of the whole transaction with his confidential steward in a sealed packet, which was not to be opened until the death of the old Countess; his motive for preserving secrecy so long appearing to have been an apprehension of the effect which the discovery, fraught with so much disgrace, must necessarily produce upon her haughty and violent temper.

In the evening of that day, the yeomanry and volunteers of Glenallan drank prosperity to their young master. In a month afterwards, Lord Geraldin was married to Miss Wardour, the Antiquary making the lady a present of the wedding ring, a massy circle of antique chasing, bearing the motto of Aldobrand Oldenbuck, *Kunst macht gunst*.

Old Edie, the most important man that ever wore a blue gown, bowls away easily from one friend's house to another, and boasts that he never travels unless on a sunny day. Latterly, indeed, he has given some symptoms of becoming stationary, being frequently found in the corner of a snug cottage between Monkbarns and Knockwinnock,

to which Caxon retreated upon his daughter's marriage, in order to be in the neighbourhood of the three parochial wigs, which he continues to keep in repair, though only for amusement. Edie has been heard to say, "This is a gay bean place, and it's a comfort to hae sic a corner to sit in in a bad day."

It is thought, as he grows stiffer in the joints, he will finally settle there.

The bounty of such wealthy patrons as Lord and Lady Geraldin flowed copiously upon Mrs Hadoway and upon the Mucklebackits. By the former it was well employed, by the latter wasted. They continue, however, to receive it, but under the administration of Edie Ochiltree; and they do not accept it without grumbling at the channel through which it is conveyed.

Hector is rising rapidly in the army, and has been more than once mentioned in the Gazette, and rises proportionally high in his uncle's favour. And, what scarcely pleases the young soldier less, he has also shot two seals, and thus put an end to the Antiquary's perpetual harping upon the story of the phoca. People talk of a marriage between Miss M'Intyre and Captain Wardour, but this wants confirmation.

The Antiquary is a frequent visitor at Knockwinnock and Glenallan-house, ostensibly for the sake of completing two essays, one on the mail-

shirt of the Great Earl, and the other on the left-hand gauntlet of Hell-in-Harness. He regularly enquires whether Lord Geraldin has commenced the Caledoniad, and shakes his head at the answers he receives. *En attendant*, however, he has completed his notes, which, we believe, will be at the service of any one who chuses to make them public, without risk or expence to THE ANTIQUARY.

END OF THE ANTIQUARY.

ROB ROY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN the Editor of the following volumes published, about two years since, the work called "The Antiquary," he announced that he was, for the last time, intruding upon the public in his present capacity. He might shelter himself under the plea, that every anonymous writer is, like the celebrated Junius, only a phantom, and that therefore, although an apparition of a more benign, as well as much meaner description, he cannot be bound to plead to a charge of inconsistency. A better apology may be found in the imitating the confession of honest Benedict, that when he said he would die a bachelor, he did not think he should live to be mar-

ried. The best of all would be, if, as has eminently happened in the case of some distinguished contemporaries, the merit of the work should, in the reader's estimation, form an excuse for the author's breach of promise. Without presuming to hope that this may prove the case, it is only further necessary to mention, that my resolution, like that of Benedict, fell a sacrifice to temptation at least, if not to stratagem.

It is now about six months since the Author, through the medium of his respectable Publishers, received a parcel of Papers, containing the Outlines of this narrative, with a permission, or rather with a request, couched in highly flattering terms, that they might be given to the Public, with such alterations as should be found suitable. These were of course so numerous, that, besides the suppression of names, and of incidents approaching too much to reality, the work may in a great measure be said to be new written. Several anachronisms have probably crept in during the course of these

changes ; and the mottoes for the Chapters have been selected without any reference to the supposed date of the incidents. For these, of course, the Editor is responsible. Some others occurred in the original materials, but they are of little consequence. In point of minute accuracy, it may be stated, that the bridge over the Forth, or rather the Avondhu, (or Black River,) near the hamlet of Aberfoil, had not an existence thirty years ago. It does not, however, become the Editor to be the first to point out these errors ; and he takes this public opportunity to thank the unknown and nameless correspondent, to whom the reader will owe the principal share of any amusement which he may derive from the following pages.

ROB ROY.

CHAPTER I.

How have I sinn'd, that this affliction
Should light so heavy on me? I have no more sons,
And this no more mine own.—My grand curse
Hang o'er his head that thus transformed thee!—Travel?
I'll send my horse to travel next.

MONSIEUR THOMAS.

YOU have requested me, my dear friend, to bestow some of that leisure with which Providence has blessed the decline of my life, in registering the hazards and difficulties which attended its commencement. The recollection of those adventures, as you are pleased to term them, has indeed left upon my mind a chequered and varied feeling of pleasure and of pain, mingled, I trust, with no slight gratitude and veneration to the Disposer of human events, who guided my early course through much risk and labour, that the ease with which he

has blessed my prolonged life, might seem softer from remembrance and contrast. Neither is it possible for me to doubt, what you have often affirmed, that the incidents which befel me among a people singularly primitive in their government and manners, have something interesting and attractive for those who love to hear an old man's stories of a past age.

Still, however, you must remember, that the tale told by one friend, and listened to by another, loses half its charms when committed to paper ; and that the narratives to which you have attended with interest, as told by the voice of him to whom they occurred, will appear less deserving of attention when perused in the seclusion of your study. But your greener age and robust constitution promise longer life than will, in all human probability, be the lot of your friend. Throw, then, these sheets into some secret drawer of your *escrutoire* till we are separated from each other's society by an event which may happen at any moment, and which must happen within the course of a few,—a very few years. When we are parted in this world, to meet, I hope, in a better, you will, I am well aware, cherish more than it deserves the memory of your departed friend, and will find in every detail which I am now to commit to paper, matter for melancholy, but not unpleasing reflection. Others bequeath to the confidants of their bosom portraits of

their external features—I put into your hands a faithful transcript of my thoughts and feelings, of my virtues and of my failings, with the assured hope, that the follies and head-strong impetuosity of my youth will meet the same kind construction and forgiveness which has so often attended the faults of my matured age.

One advantage, among the many, of addressing my Memoirs, (if I may give these sheets a name so imposing,) to a dear and intimate friend, is, that I might spare some of the details, in this case unnecessary, with which I must needs have detained a stranger from what I have to say of greater interest. Why should I bestow all my tediousness upon you, because I have you in my power, and have ink, paper, and time before me? At the same time, I dare not promise that I may not abuse the opportunity so temptingly offered me, to treat of myself and my own concerns, even though I speak of circumstances as well known to you as to myself. The seductive love of detail, when we ourselves are the heroes of the events which we tell, often disregards the attention due to the time and patience of the audience, and the best and wisest have yielded to its fascination. I need only remind you of the singular instance evinced by the form of that rare and original edition of Sully's Memoirs, which you (with the fond vanity of a book-collector,) insist upon preferring to that which is reduced

to the useful and ordinary form of Memoirs, but which I think curious, solely as illustrating how far so great a man as the author was accessible to the foible of self-importance. If I recollect rightly, that venerable peer and great statesman had appointed no fewer than four gentlemen of his household to draw up the events of his life, under the title of Memorials of the Sage and Royal Affairs of State, Domestic, Political, and Military, transacted by Henry IV., and so forth. These sage recorders, having made their compilation, reduced the Memoirs containing all the remarkable events of their master's life into a narrative, addressed to himself in *propria persona*. And thus, instead of telling his own story, in the third person, like Julius Cæsar, or in the first person, like most who, in the hall, or the study, undertake to be the heroes of their own tale, Sully enjoyed the refined, though whimsical pleasure, of having the events of his life told over to him by his secretaries, being himself the auditor, as he was also the hero, and probably the author, of the whole book. It must have been a great sight to have seen the ex-minister, as bolt upright as a starched ruff and laced cassock could make him, seated in state beneath his canopy, and listening to the recitation of his compilers, while, standing bare in his presence, they informed him gravely, " Thus said the duke—so did the duke infer—such were your grace's sentiments upon this

important point—such were your secret counsels to the king upon that other emergency,”—circumstances, of which all must have been much better known to their hearer than to themselves, and most could only be derived from his own special communication.

My situation is not quite so ludicrous as that of the great Sully, and yet there would be something whimsical in Frank Ostaldiston giving Will Tresham a formal account of his birth, education, and connections in the world. I will, therefore, wrestle with the tempting spirit of P. P., clerk of our parish, as I best may, and endeavour to tell you nothing that is familiar to you already. Some things, however, I must recal to your memory, because, though formerly well known to you, they may have been forgotten through lapse of time, and they afford the ground-work of my destiny.

You must remember my father well ; for as your own was a member of the mercantile house, you knew him from infancy. Yet you hardly saw him in his best days, before age and infirmity had quenched his ardent spirit of enterprize and speculation. He would have been a poorer man indeed, but perhaps as happy, had he devoted to the extension of science those active energies, and acute powers of observation, for which commercial pursuits found occupation. Yet, in the fluctuations of mercantile speculation, there is something cap-

tivating to the adventurer, even independent of the hope of gain. He who embarks on that fickle sea, requires to possess the skill of the pilot and the fortitude of the navigator, and after all may be wrecked and lost, unless the gales of fortune breathe in his favour. This mixture of necessary attention and inevitable hazard,—the frequent and awful uncertainty whether prudence shall overcome fortune, or fortune baffle the schemes of prudence, affords full occupation for the powers, as well as for the feelings of the mind, and trade has all the fascination of gambling without its moral guilt.

Early in the 18th century, when I (Heaven help me) was a youth of some twenty years old, I was summoned suddenly from Bourdeaux to attend my father on business of importance. I shall never forget our first interview. You recollect the brief, abrupt, and somewhat stern mode in which he was wont to communicate his pleasure to those around him. Methinks I see him even now in my mind's eye ;—the firm and upright figure,—the step, quick and determined,—the eye, which shot so keen and so penetrating a glance,—the features, on which care had already planted wrinkles,—and hear his language, in which he never wasted word in vain, expressed in a voice which had sometimes an occasional harshness, far from the intention of the speaker.

When I dismounted from my post-horse, I hastened to my father's apartment. He was traversing it with an air of composed and steady deliberation, which even my arrival, although an only son unseen for four years, was unable to discompose. I threw myself into his arms. He was a kind, though not a fond father, and the tear twinkled in his dark eye, but it was only for a moment.

"Dubourg writes to me that he is satisfied with you, Frank."

"I am happy, sir"——

"But I have less reason to be so," he added, sitting down at his bureau.

"I am sorry, sir"——

"Sorry and happy, Frank, are words that, on most occasions, signify little or nothing—Here is your last letter."

He took it out from a number of others tied up in a parcel of red tape, and curiously labelled and filed. There lay my poor epistle, written on the subject the nearest to my heart at the time, and couched in words which I had thought would work compassion, if not conviction,—there, I say, it lay, squeezed up among the letters on miscellaneous business in which my father's daily affairs had engaged him. I cannot help smiling internally when I recollect the mixture of hurt vanity, and wounded feeling, with which I regarded my remonstrance,

to the penning of which there had gone, I promise you, some trouble, as I beheld it extracted from amongst letters of advice, of credit, and all the common-place lumber, as I then thought them, of a merchant's correspondence. Surely, thought I, a letter of such importance (I dared not even say to myself so well written,) deserved a separate place, as well as more anxious consideration, than those on the ordinary business of the counting-house.

But my father did not observe my dissatisfaction, and would not have minded it if he had. He proceeded, with the letter in his hand. "This, Frank, is your's of the 21st ultimo, in which you advise me, (reading from my letter,) that in the most important business of forming a plan, and adopting a profession for life, you trust my paternal goodness will hold you entitled to at least a negative voice; that you have insuperable—ay, insuperable is the word—I wish, by the way, you would write a more distinct current hand—draw a score through the tops of your t's, and open the loops of your l's—insuperable objections to the arrangements which I have proposed to you. There is much more to the same effect, occupying four good pages of paper, which a little attention to perspicuity and distinctness of expression might have comprised within as many lines. For, after all, Frank, it amounts but to this, that you will not do as I would have you."

“That I cannot, sir, in the present instance ; not that I will not.”

“Words avail very little with me, young man,” said my father, whose inflexibility always possessed the air of the most perfect calmness and self-possession. “*Can not* may be a more civil phrase than *will not*, but the expressions are synonymous where there is no moral impossibility. But I am not a friend to doing business hastily ; we will talk this matter over after dinner.—Owen !”

Owen appeared, not with the silver locks which you were used to venerate, for he was then little more than fifty ; but he had the same, or an exactly similar suit of light brown clothes,—the same pearl-grey silk stockings,—the same stock, with its silver buckles,—the same plaited cambric ruffles, drawn down over his knuckles in the parlour, but in the counting-house carefully folded back under the sleeves, that they might remain unstained by the ink which he daily consumed ;—in a word, the same grave, formal, yet benevolent cast of features, which continued to his death to distinguish the head clerk of the great house of Osbaldiston and Tresham.

“Owen,” said my father, as the kind old man shook me affectionately by the hand, “you must dine with us to-day, and hear the news Frank has brought us from our friends at Bourdeaux.”

Owen made one of his stiff bows of respectful

gratitude ; for in those days, when the distance between superiors and inferiors was enforced in a manner to which the present times are strangers, such an invitation was a favour of some little consequence.

I shall long remember that dinner-party. Deeply affected by feelings of anxiety, not unmingled with displeasure, I was unable to take that active share in the conversation which my father seemed to expect from me ; and I too frequently gave unsatisfactory answers to the questions with which he assailed me. Owen, hovering betwixt his respect for his patron, and his love for the youth he had dandled on his knee in childhood, like the timorous, yet anxious ally of an invaded nation, endeavoured at every blunder I made to explain my meaning, and to cover my retreat ; manœuvres which added to my father's pettish displeasure, and brought a share of it upon himself, instead of protecting me. I had not, while residing in the house of Dubourg, absolutely conducted myself like

A clerk condemn'd his father's soul to cross,
Who penn'd a stanza when he should engross ;—

but, to say truth, I had frequented the counting-house no more than I had thought absolutely necessary to secure the good report of the Frenchman, long a correspondent of our firm, to whom my father had trusted for initiating me into the

secrets of commerce. In fact, my principal attention had been dedicated to literature and exercises. My father did not altogether discourage such acquirements, whether mental or personal. He had too much good sense not to perceive, that they sate gracefully upon every man, and he was sensible that they relieved and dignified the character to which he wished me to aspire. But his chief ambition was, that I should succeed not merely to his fortune, but to the views and plans by which he imagined he could extend and perpetuate the wealthy inheritance which he designed for me.

Love of his profession was the motive which he chose should be most ostensible, when he urged me to tread the same path ; but he had others with which I only became acquainted at a later period. Impetuous in his schemes, as well as skilful and daring, each new adventure, when successful, became at once the incentive, and furnished the means, for farther speculation. It seemed to be necessary to him, as to an ambitious conqueror, to push on from achievement to achievement, without stopping to secure, far less to enjoy, the acquisitions which he made. Accustomed to see his whole fortune trembling in the scales of chance, and dexterous at adopting expedients for casting the balance in his favour, his health and spirits and activity seemed ever to increase with the animating hazards on which he staked his wealth ; and he re-

sembled a sailor, accustomed to brave the billows and the foe, whose confidence rises on the eve of tempest or of battle. He was not, however, insensible to the changes which increasing age or supervening malady might make in his own constitution ; and was anxious in good time to secure in me an assistant, who might take the helm when his hand grew weary, and keep the vessel's way, according to his counsel and instruction. Paternal affection, as well as the furtherance of his own plans, determined him to the same conclusion. Your father, though his fortune was vested in the house, was only a sleeping partner, as the commercial phrase goes ; and Owen, whose probity and skill in the details of arithmetic rendered his services invaluable as a head clerk, was not possessed either of information or talents sufficient to conduct the mysteries of the principal management. If my father were suddenly summoned from life, what would become of the world of schemes which he had formed, unless his son were moulded into a commercial Hercules, fit to sustain the weight when relinquished by the falling Atlas ? and what would become of that son himself, if, a stranger to business of this description, he found himself at once involved in the labyrinth of mercantile concerns, without the clue of knowledge necessary for his extraction ? For all these reasons, avowed and secret, my father was determined I should embrace

his profession ; and when he was determined, the resolution of no man was more immoveable. I, however, was also a party to be consulted, and, with something of his own pertinacity, I had formed a determination precisely contrary.

It may, I hope, be some palliative for the resistance which, on this occasion, I offered to my father's wishes, that I did not fully understand upon what they were founded, or how deeply his happiness was involved in them. Imagining myself certain of a large succession in future, and ample maintenance in the meanwhile, it never occurred to me that it might be necessary, in order to secure these blessings, to submit to labour and limitations unpleasant to my taste and temper. I only saw in my father's proposal for my engaging in business, a desire that I should add to those heaps of wealth which he had himself acquired ; and imagining myself the best judge of the path to my own happiness, I did not conceive that I should increase it by augmenting a fortune which I believed was already sufficient, and more than sufficient, for every use, comfort, and elegant enjoyment.

Accordingly, I am compelled to repeat, that my time at Bourdeaux had not been spent as my father had proposed to himself. What he considered as the chief end of my residence in that city, I had postponed to every other, and would (had I dared) have neglected it altogether. Dubourg, a

favoured and benefitted correspondent of our mercantile house, was too much of a shrewd politician to make such reports to the head of the firm concerning his only child, as would excite the displeasure of both ; and he might also, as you will presently hear, have views of selfish advantage in suffering me to neglect the purposes for which I was placed under his charge. My conduct was regulated by the bounds of decency and good order, and thus far he had no evil report to make, supposing him so disposed ; but, perhaps, the crafty Frenchman would have been equally complaisant, had I been in the habit of indulging worse feelings than those of indolence and aversion to mercantile business. As it was, while I gave a decent portion of my time to the commercial studies he recommended, he was by no means envious of the hours which I dedicated to other and more classical attainments, nor did he ever find fault with me for dwelling upon Corneille and Boileau, in preference to Postlethwayte, (supposing his folio to have then existed, and Monsieur Dubourg able to have pronounced his name,) or Savary, or any other writer on commercial economy. He had picked up somewhere a convenient expression, with which he rounded off every letter to his correspondent,—“ I was all,” he said, “ that a father could wish.”

My father never quarrelled with a phrase, however frequently repeated, provided it seemed to him

distinct and expressive ; and Addison himself could not have found expressions so satisfactory to him as, “ Your’s received, and duly honoured the bills inclosed, as per margin.”

Knowing, therefore, very well what he desired me to be, Mr Osbaldiston made no doubt, from the frequent repetition of Dubourg’s favourite phrase, that I was the very thing he wished to see me ; when, in an evil hour, he received my letter, containing my eloquent and detailed apology for declining a place in the firm, and a desk and stool in the corner of the dark counting-house in Crane Alley, surmounting in height those of Owen, and the other clerks, and only inferior to the tripod of my father himself. All was wrong from that moment. Dubourg’s reports became as suspicious as if his bills had been noted for dishonour. I was summoned home in all haste, and received in the manner I have already communicated to you.

CHAPTER II.

I begin shrewdly to suspect the young man of a terrible taint—Poetry ; with which idle disease if he be infected, there's no hope of him in a state course. *Actum est* of him for a commonwealth's man, if he go to't in rhyme once.

BEN JONSON'S *Bartholomew Fair*.

MY father had, generally speaking, his temper under complete self-command, and his anger rarely indicated itself by words, except in a sort of dry testy manner to those who had displeased him. He never used threats, or expressions of loud resentment. All was arranged with him upon system, and it was his practice to “do the needful” upon every occasion, without wasting words about it. It was, therefore, with a bitter smile that he listened to my imperfect answers concerning the state of commerce in France, and unmercifully permitted me to involve myself deeper and deeper in the mysteries of *agio*, *tariffs*, *tare and tret* ; nor can I charge my memory with his having looked positively angry, until he found me unable to ex-

plain the exact effect which the depreciation of the louis d'or had produced upon the negociation of bills of exchange. "The most remarkable national occurrence in my time," said my father, (who nevertheless had seen the Revolution,) "and he knows no more of it than a post on the quay!"

"Mr Francis," suggested Owen, in his timid and conciliatory manner, "cannot have forgotten, that by an *arret* of the King of France, dated 1st May, 1700, it was provided that the *porteur*, within ten days after due, must make demand"——

"Mr Francis," said my father, interrupting him, "will, I dare say, recollect for the moment anything you are so kind as hint to him.—But body o' me! how Dubourg could permit him!—Hark ye, Owen, what sort of a youth is Clement Dubourg, his nephew there; in the office, the black-haired lad?"

"One of the cleverest clerks, sir, in the house; a prodigious young man for his time," answered Owen: for the gaiety and civility of the young Frenchman had won his heart.

"Ay, ay, I suppose *he* knows something of the nature of exchange. Dubourg was determined I should have one' your gster at least about my hand who understood business; but I see his drift, and he shall find that I do so when he looks at the balance-sheet. Owen, let Clement's salary be paid up to next quarter-day, and let him ship himself

back to Bourdeaux in his father's ship, which is clearing out yonder."

"Dismiss Clement Dubourg, sir?" said Owen, with a faltering voice.

"Yes, sir, dismiss him instantly; it is enough to have a stupid Englishman in the counting-house to make blunders, without keeping a sharp Frenchman there to profit by them."

I had lived long enough in the territories of the *Grand Monarque* to contract a hearty aversion to arbitrary exertion of authority, even if it had not been instilled into me with my earliest breeding; and I could not refrain from interposing, to prevent an innocent and meritorious young man from paying the penalty of having acquired that proficiency which my father had desired for me.

"I beg pardon, sir," when Mr Osbaldiston had done speaking, "but I think it but just, that, if I have been negligent of my studies, I should pay the forfeit myself. I have no reason to charge Monsieur Dubourg with having neglected to give me opportunity of improvement, however little I may have profited by them; and, with respect to Monsieur Clement Dubourg"—

"With respect to him, and to you, I shall take the measures which I see needful," replied my father: "but it is fair in you, Frank, to take your own blame on your own shoulders—very fair, that cannot be denied. I cannot acquit old Dubourg,"

he said, looking to Owen, "for having merely afforded Frank the means of useful knowledge, without either seeing that he took advantage of them, or reporting to me if he did not. You see, Owen, he has natural notions of equity becoming a British merchant."

"Mr Francis," said the head clerk, with his usual formal inclination of the head, and a slight elevation of his right hand, which he had acquired by a habit of sticking his pen behind his ear before he spoke—"Mr Francis seems to understand the fundamental principle of all moral accounting, the great ethic rule of three. Let A do to B, as he would have B do to him; the product will give the rule of conduct required."

My father smiled at this reduction of the golden rule to arithmetical form, but instantly proceeded.

"All this signifies nothing, Frank; you have been throwing away your time like a boy, and in future you must learn to live like a man. I shall put you under Owen's care for a few months, to recover the lost ground."

I was about to reply, but Owen looked at me with such a supplicatory and warning gesture, that I was involuntarily silent.

"We will then," continued my father, "resume the subject of mine, of the 1st ultimo, to which you sent me an answer which was unadvised and

unsatisfactory. So now, fill your glass, and push the bottle to Owen."

Want of courage—of audacity, if you will,—was never my failing. I answered firmly, "I was sorry that my letter was unsatisfactory, unadvised it was not; for I had given the proposal his goodness had made me my instant and anxious attention, and it was with no small pain that I found myself obliged to decline it."

My father bent his keen eye for a moment on me, and instantly withdrew it. As he made no answer, I thought myself obliged to proceed, though with some hesitation, and he only interrupted me by monosyllables.

"It is impossible, sir, for me to have higher respect for any character than I have for the commercial, even were it not yours."

"Indeed!"

"It connects nation with nation, relieves the wants, and contributes to the wealth of all; and is to the general commonwealth of the civilized world what the daily intercourse of ordinary life is to private society, or rather, what air and food are to our bodies."

"Well, sir?"

"And yet, sir, I find myself compelled to persist in declining to adopt a character which I am so ill qualified to support."

“ I will take care that you acquire the qualifications necessary. You are no longer the guest and pupil of Dubourg.”

“ But, my dear sir, it is no defect of teaching which I plead, but my own inability to profit by instruction.”

“ Nonsense ; have you kept your journal in the terms I desired ?”

“ Yes, sir.”

“ Be pleased to bring it here.”

The volume thus required was a sort of common-place book, kept by my father's recommendation, in which I had been directed to enter notes of the miscellaneous information which I had acquired in the course of my studies. Foreseeing that he would demand inspection of this record, I had been attentive to transcribe such particulars of information as he would most likely be pleased with, but too often the pen had discharged the task without much correspondence with the head. And it had also happened, that, the book being the receptacle nearest to my hand, I had occasionally jotted down memoranda which had little regard to traffic. I now put it into my father's hand, devoutly hoping he might light on nothing that would increase his displeasure against me. Owen's face, which had looked something blank when the question was put, cleared up at my ready answer, and wore a smile of hope, when I brought

from my apartment, and placed before my father, a commercial-looking volume, rather broader than it was long, having brazen clasps and a binding of rough calf. This looked business-like, and was encouraging to my benevolent well-wisher. But he actually smiled with pleasure as he heard my father run over some part of the contents, muttering his critical remarks as he went on.

“ *Brandies—Barils and barricants, also tonneaux.—At Nantz 29—Velles to the barique at Cognac and Rochells 27—At Bourdeaux 32—*Very right, Frank—*Duties on tonnage and custom-house, see Saxby’s Tables—*That’s not well; you should have transcribed the passage; it fixes the thing in the memory—*Reports outward and inward—Corn debentures—Over-sea Cockets—Linens—Isingham—Gentish—Stock-fish—Titling—Cropling—Lab-fish.* You should have noted that they are all, nevertheless, to be entered as titlings.—How many inches long is a titling?”

Owen, seeing me at fault, hazarded a whisper, of which I fortunately caught the import.

“ Eighteen inches, sir”——

“ And a lub-fish is twenty-four—very right. It is important to remember this, on account of the Portuguese trade.—But what have we here?—*Bourdeaux founded in the year—Castle of the Trompette—Palace of Gallienus—*Well, well, that’s very right too.—This is a kind of waste-

book, Owen, in which all the transactions of the day, emptions, orders, payments, receipts, acceptances, draughts, commissions, and advices, are entered miscellaneously."

"That they may be regularly transferred to the day-book and ledger," answered Owen; "I am glad Mr Francis is so methodical."

I perceived myself getting so fast into favour, that I began to fear the consequence would be my father's more obstinate perseverance in his resolution that I must become a merchant; and, as I was determined on the contrary, I began to wish I had not, to use my friend Mr Owen's phrase, been so methodical. But I had no reason for apprehension on that score; for a blotted piece of paper dropped out of the book, and, being taken up by my father, he interrupted a hint from Owen, on the propriety of securing loose memoranda with a little paste, by exclaiming, "To the memory of Edward the Black Prince—What's all this?—verses!—By Heaven, Frank, you are a greater blockhead than I supposed you!"

My father, you must recollect, as a man of business, looked upon the labour of poets with contempt; and as a religious man, and of the dissenting persuasion, he considered all such pursuits as equally trivial and profane. Before you condemn him, you must recal to remembrance how too many of the poets in the end of the seventeenth century

had led their lives and employed their talents. The sect also to which my father belonged, felt, or perhaps affected, a puritanical aversion to the lighter exertions of literature. So that many causes contributed to augment the unpleasant surprise occasioned by the ill-timed discovery of this unfortunate copy of verses. As for poor Owen, could the bob-wig which he then wore have uncurled itself, and stood on end with horror, I am convinced the morning's labour of the friseur would have been undone, merely by the excess of his astonishment at this enormity. An inroad on the strong box, or an erasure in the ledger, or a mis-summation in a fitted account, could hardly have surprised him more disagreeably. My father read the lines sometimes with an affectation of not being able to understand the sense,—sometimes in a mouthing tone of mock heroic,—always with an emphasis of the most bitter irony, most irritating to the nerves of an author.

“ O for the voice of that wild horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
The dying hero's call,
That told imperial Charlemagne,
How Paynim sons of swarthy Spain
Had wrought his champion's fall.”

“ *Fontarabian echoes !*” continued my father, interrupting himself ; “ the Fontarabian Fair would

have been more to the purpose.—*Paynim*?—
What's *Paynim*?—Could you not say *Pagan* as
well, and write English, at least, if you must needs
write nonsense?—

“ Sad over earth and ocean sounding,
And England's distant cliffs astounding,
Such are the notes should say
How Britain's hope, and France's fear,
Victor of Cressy and Poitier,
In Bourdeaux dying lay.”

“ Poitiers, by the way, is always spelt with an *s*,
and I know no reason why orthography should
give place to rhyme.—

“ Raise my faint head, my squires,” he said,
“ And let the casement be display'd,
That I may see once more
The splendour of the setting sun
Gleam on thy mirror'd wave, Garonne,
And Blaye's empurpled shore.”

“ *Garonne* and *sun* is a bad rhyme. Why,
Frank, you do not even understand the beggarly
trade you have chosen.

“ Like me, he sinks to Glory's sleep,
His fall the dews of evening steep,
As if in sorrow shed.
So soft shall fall the trickling tear,
When England's maids and matrons hear
Of their Black Edward dead.

“ And though my sun of glory set,
Nor France, nor England shall forget
The terror of my name ;
And oft shall Britain’s heroes rise,
New planets in these southern skies,
Through clouds of blood and flame.”

“ A cloud of flame is something new—Good-morrow, my masters all, and a merry Christmas to you !—Why, the bellman writes better lines.” He then tossed the paper from him with an air of superlative contempt, and concluded,—“ Upon my credit, Frank, you are a greater blockhead than I took you for.”

What could I say, my dear Tresham ?—There I stood, swelling with indignant mortification, while my father regarded me with a calm but stern look of scorn and pity ; and poor Owen, with uplifted hands and eyes, looked as striking a picture of horror as if he had just read his patron’s name in the Gazette. At length I took courage to speak, endeavouring that my tone of voice should betray my feelings as little as possible.

“ I am quite aware, sir, how ill qualified I am to play the conspicuous part in society you have destined for me ; and, luckily, I am not ambitious of the wealth I might acquire. Mr Owen would be a much more effective assistant.” I said this in some malice, for I considered Owen as having deserted my cause a little too soon.

“Owen?” said my father—“The boy is mad, actually insane. And, pray, sir, if I may presume to enquire, having coolly turned me over to Mr Owen, (although I may expect more attention from any one than from my son) what may your own sage projects be?”

“I should wish, sir,” I replied, summoning up my courage, “to travel for two or three years, should that consist with your pleasure; otherwise, although late, I would willingly spend the same time at Oxford or Cambridge.”

“In the name of common sense! was the like ever heard?—to put yourself to school among pedants and jacobites, when you might be pushing your fortune in the world! Why not go to Westminster or Eaton at once, man, and take to Lilly’s Grammar and Accidence, and to the birch too, if you like it?”

“Then, sir, if you think my plan of improvement too late, I would willingly return to the continent.”

“You have already spent too much time there to little purpose, Mr Francis.”

“Then I would choose the army, sir, in preference to any other active line of life.”

“Choose the d—l,” answered my father, hastily, and then checking himself—“I profess you make me as great a fool as you are yourself.—Is he not enough to drive one mad, Owen?”—Poor Owen

shook his head, and looked down. "Hark ye, Frank," continued my father, "I will cut all this matter very short—I was at your age when my father turned me out of doors, and settled my legal inheritance on my younger brother. I left Osbaldiston Hall on the back of a broken-down hunter, with ten guineas in my purse. I have never crossed the threshold again, and I never will. I know not, and I care not, if my fox-hunting brother is alive, or has broken his neck ; but he has children, Frank, and one of them shall be my son if you cross me farther in this matter."

"You will do your pleasure," I answered, rather, I fear, with more sullen indifference than respect, "with what is your own."

"Yes, Frank, what I have *is* my own, if labour in getting, and care in augmenting, can make a right of property ; and no drone shall feed on my honeycomb. Think on it well ; what I have said is not without reflection, and what I resolve upon I will execute."

"Honoured sir—dear sir," exclaimed Owen, tears rushing into his eyes, "you are not wont to be in such a hurry in transacting business of importance. Let Mr Francis run up the balance before you shut the account ; he loves you, I am sure ; and when he puts down his filial obedience to the *per contra*, I am sure his objections will disappear."

“ Do you think I will ask him twice,” said my father, sternly, “ to be my friend, my assistant, and my confidant?—to be a partner of my cares and of my fortune?—Owen, I thought you had known me better.”

He looked at me as if he meant to add something more, but turned instantly away, and left the room abruptly. I was, I own, affected by this view of the case, which had not occurred to me; and my father would probably have had little reason to complain of me, had he commenced the discussion with this argument.

But it was too late. I had much of his own obduracy of resolution, and Heaven had decreed that my sin should be my punishment, though not to the extent which my transgression merited. Owen, when we were left alone, continued to look at me with eyes, which tears from time to time moistened, as to discover, before attempting the task of intercessor, upon what point my obstinacy was most assailable. At length he began, with broken and disconcerted accents,—“ O l—d, Mr Francis!—Good Heavens, sir!—My stars, Mr Osbakdistone!—that I should ever have seen this day—and you so young a gentleman, sir—For the love of Heaven! look at both sides of the account—Think what you are going to lose—a noble fortune, sir—one of the finest houses in the city, even under the

old firm of Tresham and Trent, and now Osbaldistone and Tresham—You might roll in gold, Mr Francis—And, my dear young Mr Frank, if there was any particular thing in the business of the house which you disliked, I would” (sinking his voice to a whisper) “put it in order for you termly, or weekly, or daily, if you will—Do, my dear Mr Francis, think of the honour due to your father, that your days may be long in the land.”

“I am much obliged to you, Mr Owen,” said I,—“very much obliged, indeed; but my father is best judge how to bestow his money. He talks of one of my cousins—let him dispose of his wealth as he pleases, I will never sell my liberty for gold.”

“Gold, sir?—I wish you saw the balance-sheet of profits at last term—It was in five figures—five figures to each partner’s sum total, Mr Frank—And all this is to go to a Papist, and a north-country booby, and a disaffected person besides—It will break my heart, Mr Francis, that have been toiling more like a dog than a man, and all for love of the firm.—Think how it will sound, Osbaldistone, Tresham, and Osbaldistone—or, perhaps, who knows,” (again lowering his voice) “Osbaldistone, Osbaldistone, and Tresham, for our Mr Osbaldistone can buy them all out.”

“ But, Mr Owen, my cousin’s name being also Osbaldistone, the name of the company will sound every bit as well in your ears.”

“ O, fie upon you, Mr Francis, when you know how well I love you—your cousin, indeed !—a Papist, no doubt, like his father, and a disaffected person to the Protestant succession—that’s another item, doubtless.”

“ There are many very good men Catholics, Mr Owen,” rejoined I.

As Owen was about to answer with unusual animation, my father re-entered the apartment.

“ You were right,” he said, “ Owen, and I was wrong ; we will take more time to think over this matter.—Young man. you will prepare to give me an answer on this important subject this day month.”

I bowed in silence, sufficiently glad of a reprieve, and trusting it might indicate some relaxation in my father’s determination.

The time of probation past slowly, unmarked by any accident whatever. I went and came, and disposed of my time as I pleased, without question or criticism on the part of my father. Indeed, I rarely saw him, save at meal times, when he studiously avoided a discussion which you may well suppose I was in no hurry to press onward. Our conversation was of the news of the day, or of such

general topics as strangers discourse upon to each other; nor could any one have guessed, from its tenor, that there remained undecided betwixt us a dispute of such importance. It haunted me, however, more than once, like a night mare. Was it possible he would keep his word, and disinherit his only son in favour of a nephew, whose very existence he was not perhaps quite certain of? My grandfather's conduct, in similar circumstances, boded me no good, had I considered the matter rightly. But I had formed an erroneous idea of my father's character, from the importance which I recollected I maintained with him and his whole family before I went to France. I was not aware, that there are men who indulge their children at an early age, because it interests and amuses them, and who can yet be sufficiently severe when the same children cross their expectations at a more advanced period. On the contrary, I persuaded myself, that all I had to apprehend, was some temporary alienation of affection;—perhaps a rustication of a few weeks, which I thought would rather please me as otherwise, since it would give me an opportunity of setting about my unfinished version of *Orlando Furioso*, a poem which I longed to render into English verse. I suffered this belief to get such absolute possession of my mind, that I had resumed my blotted papers, and was busy in meditation on the

oft-recurring rhymes of the Spenserian stanza, when I heard a low and cautious tap at the door of my apartment. "Come in," I said, and Mr Owen entered. So regular were the motions and habits of this worthy man, that in all probability this was the first time he had ever been in the second storey of his patron's house, however conversant with the first ; and I am still at a loss to know in what manner he discovered my apartment.

"Mr Francis," he said, interrupting my expressions of surprise and pleasure at seeing him, "I do not know if I am doing well in what I am about to say—it is not right to speak of what passes in the compting-house out of doors—one should not tell, as they say, to the post in the warehouse, how many lines there are in the ledger. But young Twineall has been absent from the house for a fortnight and more, until two days since."

"Very well, my dear sir, and how does that concern us?"

"Stay, Mr Francis—your father gave him a private commission ; and I am sure he did not go down to Falmouth about the pilchard affair ; and the Exeter business with Blackwell and Company has been settled ; and the mining people in Cornwall, Trevanion and Treguilliam, have paid all they are like to pay ; and any other matter of business must have been put through my books ; in

short, it's my faithful belief that Twineall has been down in the north."

"Do you really suppose so?" said I, somewhat startled.

"He has spoken about nothing, sir, since he returned, but his new boots, and his Rippon spurs, and a cock-fight at York—it's as true as the multiplication-table. Do, Heaven bless you, my dear child, make up your mind to please your father, and to be a man and a merchant at once."

I felt at that instant a strong inclination to submit, and to make Owen happy by requesting him to tell my father, that I resigned myself to his disposal. But pride—pride, the source of so much that is good and so much that is evil in our course of life, prevented me. My acquiescence stuck in my throat; and while I was coughing to get it up, my father's voice summoned Owen. He hastily left the room, and the opportunity was lost.

My father was methodical in every thing. At the very same time of the day, in the same apartment, and with the same tone and manner which he had employed an exact month before, he recapitulated the proposal he had made for taking me into partnership, and assigning me a department in the counting-house, and requested to have my final decision. I thought at the time there was something unkind in this; and I still think that my

father's conduct was injudicious. A more conciliatory treatment would, in all probability, have gained his purpose. As it was, I stood fast, and, as respectfully as I could, declined the proposal he made to me. Perhaps,—for who can judge of their own heart,—I felt it unmanly to yield on the first summons, and expected farther solicitation, as, at least, a pretext for changing my mind. If so, I was disappointed ; for my father turned coolly to Owen, and only said, “ You see it is as I told you. —Well, Frank,” (addressing me) “ You are nearly of age, and as well qualified to judge of what will constitute your own happiness as you ever are like to be ; therefore, I say no more. But as I am not bound to give into your plans, any more than you are compelled to submit to mine, may I ask to know if you have formed any which depend on my assistance ?”

I answered, not a little abashed, “ That being bred to no profession, and having no funds of my own, it was obviously impossible for me to subsist without some allowance from my father ; that my wishes were very moderate ; and that I hoped my aversion for the profession to which he had designed me, would not occasion his altogether withdrawing his paternal support and protection.”

“ That is to say, you wish to lean on my arm, and yet to walk your own way ? That can hardly be, Frank ;—however, I suppose you mean to obey

my directions, so far as they do not cross your own humour?"

I was about to speak—" Silence, if you please," he continued. " Supposing this to be the case, you will instantly set out for the North of England, to pay your uncle a visit, and see the state of his family. I have chosen from among his sons (he has seven I believe) one whom I understand is most worthy to fill the place I intended for you in the counting-house. But some farther arrangements may be necessary, and for these your presence may be requisite. You shall have further instructions at Osbaldistone Hall, where you will please to remain until you hear from me. Every thing will be ready for your departure to-morrow morning."

With these words my father left the apartment.

" What does all this mean, Mr Owen?" said I to my sympathetic friend, whose countenance wore a cast of the deepest dejection.

" You have ruined yourself, Mr Frank, that's all; when your father talks in that quiet determined manner, there will be no more change in him than in a fitted account."

And so it proved; for the next morning, at five o'clock, I found myself on the road to York, mounted on a reasonably good horse, and with fifty guineas in my pocket; travelling, as it would seem,

for the purpose of assisting in the adoption of a successor to myself in my father's house and favour, and, for aught I knew, eventually in his fortune also.

CHAPTER III.

The slack sail shifts from side to side,
The boat, untrimm'd, admits the tide,
Borne down, adrift, at random tost,
'The oar breaks short, the rudder's lost.

GAY'S *Fables*.

I HAVE tagged with rhyme and blank verse the subdivisions of this important narrative, in order to seduce your continued attention by powers of composition of stronger attraction than my own. The preceding lines refer to an unfortunate navigator, who daringly unloosed from its moorings a boat, which he was unable to manage, and thrust it off into the full tide of a navigable river. No school-boy, who, betwixt frolic and defiance, had executed a similar rash attempt, could feel himself, when adrift in a strong current, in a situation more awkward than mine, when I found myself driving, without a compass, on the ocean of human life. There had been such unexpected ease in the manner in which my father slipt a knot, usually esteemed the strongest which binds society

together, and suffered me to depart as a sort of outcast from his family, that it strangely lessened the confidence in my own personal accomplishments, which had hitherto sustained me. Prince Prettyman, now a prince, and now a fisher's son, had not a more awkward sense of his degradation. We are so apt, in our engrossing egotism, to consider all those accessories which are drawn around us by prosperity, as pertaining and belonging to our own persons, that the discovery of our unimportance, when left to our own proper resources, becomes inexpressibly mortifying. As the hum of London died away on my ear, the distant peal of her steeples more than once sounded to my ears the admonitory "Turn again," erst heard by her future Lord Mayor; and when I looked back from Highgate on her dusky magnificence, I felt as if I were leaving behind me comfort, opulence, the charms of society, and all the pleasures of cultivated life.

But the die was cast. It was, indeed, by no means probable that a late and ungracious compliance with my father's wishes would have reinstated me in the situation which I had lost. On the contrary, firm and strong of purpose as he himself was, he might rather have been disgusted than conciliated by my tardy and compulsory acquiescence in his desire that I should enter into commerce. My constitutional obstinacy came also to

my aid, and pride whispered how poor a figure I should make, when an airing of four miles from London had blown away resolutions formed in a month's serious deliberation. Hope, too, that never forsakes the young and hardy, lent her lustre to my future prospects. My father could not be serious in the sentence of foris-filiation, which he had so unhesitatingly pronounced. It must be but a trial of my disposition, which, endured with patience and steadiness on my part, would raise me in his estimation, and lead to an amicable accommodation of the point in dispute between us. I even settled in my own mind how far I would concede to him, and upon what articles of our supposed treaty I would make a firm stand ; and the result was, according to my computation, that I was to be reinstated in my full rights of filiation, paying the easy penalty of some ostensible compliances to atone for my past rebellion.

In the meanwhile, I was lord of my person, and experienced that feeling of independence which the youthful bosom receives with a thrilling mixture of pleasure and apprehension. My purse, though by no means amply replenished, was in a situation to supply all the wants and wishes of a traveller. I had been accustomed, while at Bourdeaux, to act as my own valet : my horse was fresh, young, and active, and the buoyancy of my spirits soon sur-

mounted the melancholy reflections with which my journey commenced.

I should have been glad if I had journeyed upon a line of road better calculated to afford reasonable objects of curiosity, or a more interesting country, to the traveller. But the north road was then, and perhaps still is, singularly deficient in these respects; nor do I believe you can travel so far through Britain in any other direction without meeting more of what is worthy to engage the attention. My mental ruminations, notwithstanding my assumed confidence, were not always of an unchequered nature. The Muse too,—the very coquette who had led me into this wilderness,—like others of her sex, deserted me in my utmost need; and I should have been reduced to rather an uncomfortable state of dulness, had it not been for the occasional conversation of strangers who chanced to pass the same way. But the characters whom I met with were of a uniform and uninteresting description. Country parsons, jogging homewards after a visitation; farmers, or graziers, returning from a distant market; clerks of traders, travelling to collect what was due to their masters in provincial towns, with now and then an officer going down into the country upon the recruiting service, were, at this period, the persons by whom the turnpikes and tapsters were kept in exercise. Our speech, therefore, was of tithes and creeds, of

beeves and grain, of commodities wet and dry, and the solvency of the retail dealers, occasionally varied by the description of a siege, or battle, in Flanders, which, perhaps, the narrator only gave me at second hand. Robbers, a fertile and alarming theme, filled up every vacancy ; and the names of the Golden Farmer, the Flying Highwayman, Jack Needham, and other Beggar's Opera heroes, were familiar in our mouths as household words. At such tales, like children closing their circle round the fire when the ghost story draws to its climax, the riders drew near to each other, looked before and behind them, examined the priming of their pistols, and vowed to stand by each other in case of danger ; an engagement which, like other offensive and defensive alliances, sometimes glided out of remembrance when there was an appearance of actual peril.

Of all the fellows whom I ever saw haunted by terrors of this nature, one poor man, with whom I travelled a day and a half, afforded me most amusement. He had upon his pillion a very small, but apparently a very weighty portmanteau, about the safety of which he seemed particularly solicitous ; never trusting it out of his own immediate care, and uniformly repressing the officious zeal of the waiters and ostlers, who offered their services to carry it into the house. With the same precaution he laboured to conceal, not only the purpose

of his journey, and his ultimate place of destination, but even the direction of each day's route. Nothing embarrassed him more than to be asked by any one, whether he was travelling upward or downward, or at what stage he intended to bait. His place of rest for the night he scrutinized with the most anxious care, alike avoiding solitude, and what he considered as bad neighbourhood; and at Grantham, I believe, he sate up all night to avoid sleeping in the next room to a thick-set squinting fellow, in a black wig, and a tarnished gold-laced waistcoat. With all these cares on his mind, my fellow traveller, to judge by his thewes and sinews, was a man who might have set danger at defiance with as much impunity as most men. He was strong, and well-built; and, judging from his gold-laced hat and cockade, seemed to have served in the army, or, at least, to belong to the military profession in one capacity or other. His conversation also, though always sufficiently vulgar, was that of a man of sense, when the terrible bugbears which haunted his imagination for a moment ceased to occupy his attention. But every accidental association recalled them. An open heath, a close plantation, were alike subjects of his apprehension; and the whistle of a shepherd lad was instantly converted into the signal of a depredator. Even the sight of a gibbet, if it assured him that one

robber was safely disposed of by justice, never failed to remind him how many remained still unchanged.

I should have wearied of this fellow's company, had I not been still more tired of my own thoughts. Some of the marvellous stories, however, which he related, had in themselves a cast of interest, and another whimsical point of his peculiarities afforded me the occasional opportunity of amusing myself at his expence. Among his tales, several of the unfortunate travellers who fell among thieves, incurred that calamity from associating themselves on the road with a well-dressed and entertaining stranger, in whose company they trusted to find protection as well as amusement; who cheered their journey with tale and song, protected them against the evils of overcharges and false reckonings, until at length, under pretext of showing a nearer road over a desolate common, he seduced his unsuspecting victims from the public road into some dismal glen, where, suddenly blowing his whistle, he assembled his comrades from their lurking-place, and displayed himself in his true colours, the captain, namely, of the band of robbers to whom his unwary fellow-travellers had forfeited their purses, and perhaps their lives. Towards the conclusion of such a tale, and when my companion had wrought himself into a fever of apprehension by the progress of his own narrative, I observed that

he usually eyed me with a glance of doubt and suspicion, as if the possibility occurred to him, that he might, at the very moment of speaking, be in company with a character as dangerous as that which his tale described. And ever and anon, when such suggestions pressed themselves on the mind of this ingenious self-tormentor, he drew off from my side to the opposite side of the high road, looked before, behind, and around him, examined his arms, and seemed to prepare himself for flight or defence, as circumstances might require.

The suspicion implied on such occasions seemed to be only momentary, and appeared to me too ludicrous to be offensive. There was, in fact, no particular reflection on my dress or address, although I was thus mistaken for a robber. A man in these days might have all the external appearance of a gentleman, and yet turn out a highwayman. For the division of labour in every department not having then taken place so fully as since that period, the profession of the polite and accomplished adventurer, who nicked you out of your money at White's, or bowled you out of it at Marybone, was often united with that of the professed ruffian, who, on Bagshot Heath, or Finchley Common, commanded his brother beau to stand and deliver. There was also a touch of coarseness and hardness about the manners of the times, which has since, in a great degree, been softened and shaded away

It seems to me, on recollection, as if desperate men had less reluctance then, than now, to embrace the most desperate means of retrieving their fortune. The times were indeed past, when Anthony-a-Wood mourned over the execution of two men, goodly in person, and of undisputed courage and honour, who were hanged without mercy at Oxford, merely because their distress had driven them to raise contributions on the highway. We were still farther removed from the days of "the mad Prince and Poins." And yet, from the number of uninclosed and extensive heaths in the vicinity of the metropolis, and from the less populous state of remote districts, both were frequented by that species of mounted highwaymen, that may possibly become one day unknown, who carried on their trade with something like courtesy; and, like Gibbet in the *Beaux Stratagem*, piqued themselves on being the best behaved men on the road, and on appearing with all appropriate civility in the exercise of their vocation. A young man, therefore, in my circumstances, was not entitled to be highly indignant at the mistake which confounded him with this worshipful class of depredators.

Neither was I offended. On the contrary, I found amusement in alternately exciting, and lulling to sleep, the suspicions of my timorous companion, and in purposely so acting as still farther to puzzle a brain which nature and apprehension had

combined to render none of the clearest. When my free conversation had lulled him into complete security, it required only a passing enquiry concerning the direction of his journey, or the nature of the business which occasioned it, to put his suspicions once more in arms. For example, a conversation on the comparative strength and activity of our horses took such a turn as follows:—

“O sir,” said my companion, “for the gallop, I grant you; but allow me to say, your horse (although he is a very handsome gelding—that must be owned) has too little bone to be a good roadster. The trot, sir,” (striking his Bucephalus with his spurs,) “the trot is the true pace for a hackney; and, were we near a town, I should like to try that daisy-cutter of yours upon a piece of level road (barring canter) for a quart of claret at the next inn.”

“Content, sir,” replied I; “and here is a stretch of ground very favourable.”

“Hem, ahem,” answered my friend with hesitation; “I make it a rule of travelling never to blow my horse between stages; one never knows what occasion he may have to put him to his mettle; and besides, sir, when I said I would match you, I meant with even weight; you ride four stone lighter than I.”

“Very well; but I am content to carry weight. Pray what may that portmanteau of yours weigh?”

“ My p—p—portmanteau ? ” replied he hesitating—“ O very little—a feather—just a few shirts and stockings.”

“ I should think it heavier from its appearance. I’ll hold you the quart of claret it makes the odds betwixt our weight.”

“ You’re mistaken, sir, I assure you—quite mistaken,” replied my friend, edging off to the side of the road, as was his wont on these alarming occasions.

“ Well, I’m willing to venture the wine ; or, I will bet you ten pieces to five, that I carry your portmanteau on my croupe, and out-trot you into the bargain.”

This proposal raised my friend’s alarm to the uttermost. His nose changed from the natural copper hue which it had acquired from many a comfortable cup of claret, or sack, into a palish brassy tint, and his teeth chattered with apprehension at the unveiled audacity of my proposal, which seemed to place the bare-faced plunderer before him in full atrocity. As he faltered for an answer, I relieved him in some degree by a question concerning a steeple, which now became visible, and an observation that we were now so near the village as to run no risk from interruption upon the road. At this his countenance cleared up ; but I easily perceived that it was long ere he forgot a proposal which seemed to him so fraught with suspicion as

that which I had now hazarded. I trouble you with this detail of the man's disposition, and the manner in which I practised upon it, because, however trivial in themselves, these particulars were attended by an important influence upon future incidents which will occur in this narrative. At the time, this person's conduct only inspired me with contempt, and confirmed me in an opinion, which I already entertained, that of all the propensities which teach mankind to torment themselves, that of causeless fear is the most irritating, busy, painful, and pitiable.

CHAPTER IV.

The Scots are poor, cries surly English pride.
True is the charge ; nor by themselves denied.
Are they not, then, in strictest reason clear,
Who wisely come to mend their fortunes here ?

CHURCHILL.

THERE was, in the days of which I write, an old-fashioned custom upon the English road, which I suspect is now obsolete, or practised only by the vulgar. Journies of length being made on horse-back, and, of course, by brief stages, it was usual always to make a halt upon the Sunday in some town where the traveller might attend divine service, and his horse have the benefit of the day of rest, the institution of which is as humane to our brute labourers as profitable to ourselves. A counterpart to this decent practice, and a remnant of old English hospitality, was, that the landlord of a principal inn laid aside his character of publican upon the seventh day, and invited the guests who chanced to be within his walls to take a part of his

family beef and pudding. This invitation was usually complied with by all whose distinguished rank did not induce them to think compliance a derogation ; and the proposal of a bottle of wine after dinner, to drink the landlord's health, was the only recompence ever offered or accepted.

I was born a citizen of the world, and my inclination led me into all scenes where my knowledge of mankind could be enlarged ; I had, besides, no pretensions to sequester myself on the score of superior dignity, and, therefore, seldom failed to accept of the Sunday's hospitality of mine host, whether of the Garter, Lion, or Bear. The honest publican, dilated into additional consequence by a sense of his own importance, while presiding among the guests on whom it was his ordinary duty to attend, was in himself an entertaining spectacle ; and around his genial orbit, other planets of inferior consequence performed their revolutions. The wits and humourists, the distinguished worthies of the town or village, the apothecary, the attorney, even the curate himself, did not disdain to partake of this hebdomadal festivity. The guests, assembled from different quarters, and following different professions, formed, in language, manners, and sentiments, a curious contrast to each other, not indifferent to those who desired to possess a knowledge of mankind in its varieties.

It was upon such a day, and such an occasion, that my timorous acquaintance and I were about to grace the board of the ruddy-faced host of the Black Bear, in the town of Darlington, and bishoprick of Durham, when our landlord informed us, with a sort of apologetic tone, that there was a Scotch gentleman to dine with us.

“ A gentleman ?—what sort of a gentleman ?” said my companion, somewhat hastily, his mind, I suppose, running upon gentlemen of the pad, as they were then termed.

“ Why, a Scotch sort of a gentleman, as I said before,” returned mine host ; “ they are all gentle, ye mun know, though they ha’ narra shirt to back ; but this is a decentish hallion—a canny North Briton as e’er crossed Berwick-bridge—I trow he’s a dealer in cattle.”

“ Let us have his company, by all means,” answered my companion ; and then, turning to me, he gave vent to the tenor of his own reflections “ I respect the Scotch, sir ; I love and honour the nation for their sense of morality. Men talk of their filth and their poverty, but commend me to sterling honesty, though clad in rags, as the poet saith. I have been credibly assured, sir, by men on whom I can depend, that there was never known such a thing in Scotland as a highway robbery.”

“That’s because they have nothing to lose,” said mine host, with the chuckle of a self-applauding wit.

“No, no, landlord,” answered a strong deep voice behind him, “it’s e’en because your English gaugers and supervisors, that you have sent down benorth the Tweed, have ta’en up the trade of thievery over the heads of the native professors.”

“Well said, Mr Campbell,” answered the landlord; “I did nat think thou’d’st been sae near us, mon. But thou kens I’m an outspoken Yorkshire tyke—And how go markets in the south?”

“Even in the ordinar,” replied Mr Campbell; “wise folks buy and sell, and fools are bought and sold.”

“But wise men and fools both eat their dinner,” answered our jolly entertainer; “and here a comes—as prime a buttock of beef as e’er hungry mon stuck fork in.”

So saying, he eagerly whetted his knife, assumed his seat of empire at the head of the board, and loaded the plates of his sundry guests with his good cheer.

This was the first time I had heard the Scottish accent, or, indeed, that I had familiarly met with an individual of the ancient nation by whom it was spoken. Yet, from an early period, they had occupied and interested my imagination. My father, as is well known to you, was of an ancient

family in Northumberland, from whose seat I was not very many miles distant. The quarrel betwixt him and his relatives was such, that he scarcely ever mentioned the race from which he sprung, and held as the most contemptible species of vanity, the weakness which is commonly termed family pride. His ambition was only to be distinguished as William Osbaldistone, the first, at least one of the first, merchants on Change ; and to have proved him the lineal representative of William the Conqueror, would have far less flattered his vanity than the hum and bustle which his approach was wont to produce among the bulls, bears, and brokers of Stock-alley. He wished, no doubt, that I should remain in such ignorance of my relatives and descent as might insure a correspondence between my feelings and his own on this subject. But his designs, as will happen occasionally to the wisest, were, in some degree at least, counteracted by a being whom his pride would never have supposed of importance adequate to influence them in any way. His nurse, an old Northumbrian woman, attached to him from his infancy, was the only person connected with his native province for whom he retained any regard ; and when fortune dawned upon him, one of the first uses which he made of her favours, was to give Mabel Rickets a place of residence within his household. After the death of my mother, the care of nursing me

during my childish illnesses, and of rendering all those tender attentions which infancy exacts from female affection, devolved on old Mabel. Interdicted by her master from speaking to him on the subject of the heaths, glades, and dales of her beloved Northumberland, she poured herself forth to my infant ear in descriptions of the scenes of her youth, and long narratives of the events which tradition declared to have passed amongst them. To these I inclined my ear much more seriously than to graver, but less animated instructors. Even yet, methinks I see old Mabel, her head slightly agitated by the palsy of age, and shaded by a close cap, as white as the driven snow,—her face wrinkled, but still retaining the healthy tinge which it had acquired in rural labour.—I think I see her look around on the brick walls and narrow street which presented themselves from our windows, as she concluded with a sigh the favourite old ditty, which I then preferred, and—why should I not tell the truth—which I still prefer, to all the opera airs ever minted by the capricious brain of an Italian Mus. D.—

Oh the oak, the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They flourish best at home in the North Country !

Now, in the legends of Mabel, the Scottish nation was ever freshly remembered, with all the embittered declamation of which the narrator was capa-

ble. The inhabitants of the opposite frontier served in her narratives to fill up the parts which ogres and giants with seven-leagued boots occupy in the ordinary nursery-tales. And how could it be otherwise? Was it not the Black Douglas who slew with his own hand the heir of the Osbaldistone family the day after he took possession of his estate, surprising him and his vassals while solemnizing a feast suited to the occasion? Was it not Wat the Devil who drove all the year-old hogs off the braes of Lanthorn-side, in the very recent days of my grandfather's father? And had we not many a trophy, but, according to old Mabel's version of history, far more honourably gained, to mark our vengeance of these wrongs? Did not Sir Henry Osbaldistone, fifth baron of the name, carry off the fair maid of Fairnington, as Achilles did his Chryseis and Briseis of old, and detain her in his fortress against all the power of her friends, supported by the most mighty Scottish chiefs of warlike fame? And had not our swords shone foremost at most of those fields in which England was victorious over her rival? All our family renown was acquired,—all our family misfortunes were occasioned,—by the northern wars.

Warned by such tales, I looked upon the Scottish people, during my childhood, as a race hostile by nature to the more southern inhabitants of this realm; and this view of the matter was not much

corrected by the language which my father sometimes held with respect to them. He had engaged in some large speculations concerning oak-woods, the property of Highland proprietors, and alleged that he found them much more ready to ~~make~~ bargain, and extort earnest of the purchase-money, than punctual in complying on their side with the terms of the engagements. The Scotch mercantile men, whom he was under the necessity of employing as a sort of middle-men on these occasions, were also suspected by my father of having secured, by one means or other, more than their own share of the profit which ought to have accrued. In short, if Mabel complained of the Scottish arms in ancient times, Mr Osbaldistone inveighed no less against the arts of these modern Simons; and between them, though without any fixed purpose of doing so, they impressed my youthful mind with a sincere aversion to the northern inhabitants of Britain, as a people blood-thirsty in time of war, treacherous during truce, interested, selfish, avaricious, and tricky in the business of peaceful life, and having few good qualities, unless there should be accounted such, a ferocity which resembled courage in martial affairs, and in commerce a sort of wily craft, which supplied the place of wisdom in the ordinary commerce of mankind. In justification, or apology, for those who entertained such prejudices, I must remark, that the

Scotch of the period were guilty of similar injustice to the English, whom they branded universally as a race of purse-proud arrogant epicures. Such seeds of national dislike remained between the two countries, the natural consequences of their existence as separate and rival states. We have seen recently the breath of a demagogue blow these sparks into a temporary flame, which I sincerely hope is now extinguished in its own ashes.*

It was, then, with an impression of dislike, that I contemplated the first Scotchman I chanced to meet in society. There was much about him that coincided with my previous conceptions. He had the hard features and athletic form, said to be peculiar to his country, together with the national intonation and slow pedantic mode of expression, arising from the desire to avoid peculiarities of idiom or dialect. I could also observe the caution and shrewdness of his country in many of the observations which he made, and the answers which he returned. But I was not prepared for the air of easy self-possession and superiority, with which he seemed to predominate over the company into which he was thrown, as it were by accident. His dress was as coarse as it could be, being still decent; and, at a time when great expence was la-

* This seems to have been written about the time of Wilkes and Liberty.

vished upon the wardrobe, even of the lowest who pretended to the character of gentlemen, this indicated mediocrity of circumstances, if not poverty. His conversation intimated, that he was engaged in the cattle-trade, no very dignified professional pursuit. And yet, under these disadvantages, he seemed, as a matter of course, to treat the rest of the company with the cool and condescending politeness, which implies a real, or imagined, superiority over those towards whom it is used. When he gave his opinion on any point, it was with that easy tone of confidence used by those superior to their society in rank or information, as if what he said could not be doubted, and was not to be questioned. Mine host and his Sunday guests, after an effort or two to support their consequence by noise and bold averment, sunk gradually under the authority of Mr Campbell, who thus fairly possessed himself of the lead in the conversation. I was tempted, from curiosity, to dispute the ground with him myself, confiding in my knowledge of the world, extended, as it was, by my residence abroad, and in the stores with which a tolerable education had possessed my mind. In the latter respect, he offered no competition, and it was easy to see that his natural powers had never been cultivated by education. But I found him much better acquainted than I was myself with the present state of France, the character of the

Duke of Orleans, who had just succeeded to the regency of that kingdom, and that of the statesmen by whom he was surrounded; and his shrewd, caustic, and somewhat satirical remarks, were those
* of a man who had been a close observer of the affairs of that country. . . .

On the subject of politics, Campbell observed a silence and moderation which might arise from caution. The divisions of Whig and Tory then shook England to her very centre, and a powerful party, engaged in the Jacobite interest, menaced the dynasty of Hanover, which had been just established on the throne. Every alehouse resounded with the brawls of contending politicians, and as mine host's politics were of that liberal description which quarrelled with no good customer, his hebdomadal visitants were often divided in their opinion as irreconcilably as if he had feasted the Common Council. The curate and the apothecary, with a little man, who made no boast of his vocation, but who, from the flourish and snap of his fingers, I believe to have been the barber, strongly espoused the cause of high church and the Stuart line. The exciseman, as in duty bound, and the attorney, who looked to some petty office under the crown, together with my fellow-traveller, who seemed to enter keenly into the contest, staunchly supported the cause of King George and the Protestant succession. Dire was the screaming—deep

the oaths ! Each party appealed to Mr Campbell, anxious, it seemed, to elicit his approbation.

“ You are a Scotchman, sir ; a gentleman of your country must stand up for hereditary right,” cried one party.

“ You are a Presbyterian,” assumed the other class of disputants ; “ you cannot be a friend to arbitrary power.”

“ Gentlemen,” said our Scotch oracle, after having gained, with some difficulty, a moment’s pause, “ I havena much dubitation that King George weel deserves the predilection of his friends ; and if he can haud the grip he has gotten, why, doubtless, he may make the gauger, here, a commissioner of the revenue, and confer on our friend, Mr Quitam, the preferment of solicitor-general ; and he may also grant some good deed or reward to this honest gentleman who is sitting upon his portmanteau, which he prefers to a chair : And, questionless, King James is also a grateful person, and when he gets his hand in play, he may, if he be so minded, make this reverend gentleman arch-bishop of Canterbury, and Dr Mixit chief physician to his household, and commit his royal beard to the care of my friend Latherum. But as I doubt nickle whether any of the competing sovereigns would give Rob Campbell a tass of aquavite, if he lacked it, I give my vote and interest

to Jonathan Brown, our landlord, to be the King and Prince of Skinkers, conditionally that he fetches us another bottle as good as the last."

This sally was received with general applause, in which the landlord cordially joined ; and when he had given orders for fulfilling the condition on which his preferment was to depend, he failed not to acquaint them, " that, for as peaceable a gentleman as Mr Campbell was, he was, moreover, as bold as a lion—seven highwaymen had he defeated with his single arm, that beset him as he came from Whitson-Tryste."

" Thou art deceived, friend Jonathan," said Campbell, interrupting him ; " they were but barely two, and two cowardly loons as man would wish to meet withal."

" And did you, sir, really," said my fellow-traveller, edging his chair (I should have said his portmanteau) nearer to Mr Campbell, " really and actually beat two highwaymen yourself alone ?"

" In troth did I, sir," replied Campbell ; " and I think it nae great thing to make a sang about."

" Upon my word, sir," replied my acquaintance, " I should be happy to have the pleasure of your company upon my journey—I go northward, sir."

This piece of gratuitous information concerning the route he proposed to himself, the first I had

heard my companion bestow upon any one, failed to excite the corresponding confidence of the Scotchman.

"We can scarce travel together," he replied, drily. "You, sir, doubtless, are well mounted, and I, for the present, travel upon foot, or on a Highland shelty, that does not help me much faster forward."

So saying, he called for a reckoning for the wine, and throwing down the price of the additional bottle which he had himself introduced, rose as if to take leave of us. My companion made up to him, and, taking him by the button, drew him aside into one of the windows. I could not help overhearing him pressing something ;—I supposed his company upon the journey, which Mr Campbell seemed to decline.

"I will pay your charges, sir," said the traveller, in a tone, as if he thought the argument should bear down all opposition.

"It is quite impossible," said Campbell, somewhat contemptuously ; "I have business at Rothbury."

"But I am in no great hurry ; I can ride out of the way, and never miss a day or so for good company."

"Upon my faith, sir," said Campbell, "I cannot render you the service you seem to desiderate. I am," he added, drawing himself up haughtily,

“travelling on my own private affairs, and if ye will act by my advisement, sir, ye will unite yourself with no stranger on the road, nor communicate your line of journey to those who are asking ye no questions about it.” He then extricated his button, not very ceremoniously, from the hold which detained him, and, coming up to me as the company were dispersing, observed, “Your friend, sir, is too communicative, considering the nature of his trust.”

“That gentleman,” I replied, looking towards the traveller, “is no friend of mine, but an acquaintance whom I picked up on the road. I know neither his name nor business, and you seem to be deeper in his confidence than I am.”

“I only meant,” he replied hastily, “that he seems a thought rash in conferring the honour of his company on those who desire it not.”

“The gentleman,” replied I, “is best judge of his own affairs, and I should be sorry to constitute myself a judge of them in any respect.”

Mr Campbell made no farther observation, but merely wished me a good journey, and the party dispersed for the evening.

Next day I parted company with my timid companion, as I left the great northern road to turn more westerly in the direction of Osbaldistone Manor, my uncle's seat. I cannot tell whether he felt relieved or embarrassed by my depar-

ture, considering the dubious light in which he seemed to regard me. For my own part, his tremors ceased to amuse me, and, to say the truth, I was heartily glad to get rid of him.

CHAPTER V.

How melts my beating heart ! as I behold
Each lovely nymph, our island's boast and pride .
Push on the generous steed, that sweeps along
O'er rough, o'er smooth, nor heeds the steepy hill,
Nor falters in the extended vale below.

The Chase.

I APPROACHED my native north, for such I esteemed it, with that enthusiasm which romantic and wild scenery inspires in the lovers of nature. No longer interrupted by the babble of my companion, I could now remark the difference which the country exhibited from that through which I had hitherto travelled. The streams now more properly deserved the name, for, instead of slumbering stagnant among reeds and willows, they brawled along beneath the shade of natural copse-wood ; were now hurried down declivities, and now purred more leisurely, but still in active motion, through little lonely vallies, which, opening on the road from time to time, seemed to invite the traveller to explore their recesses The Che-

viots rose before me in frowning majesty ; not, indeed, with the sublime variety of rock and cliff which characterize mountains of the primary class, but huge, round-headed, and clothed with a dark robe of russet, gaining, by their extent and desolate appearance, an influence upon the imagination, which possessed a character of its own.

The abode of my fathers, which I was now approaching, was situated in a glen, or narrow valley, which ran up among those hills. Extensive estates, which once belonged to the family, had been long dissipated by the misfortunes or misconduct of my ancestors ; but enough was still attached to the old mansion, to give my uncle the title of a man of large property. This he employed (as I was given to understand by some enquiries which I made on the road) in maintaining the prodigal hospitality of a northern squire of the period, which he deemed essential to his family dignity.

From the summit of an eminence, I had already had a distant view of Osbaldistone Hall, a large and antiquated edifice, peeping out from a Druidical grove of huge oaks ; and I was directing my course towards it, as straightly and as speedily as the windings of a very indifferent road would permit, when my horse, tired as he was, pricked up his ears at the enlivening notes of a pack of hounds in full cry, cheered by the occasional bursts of a

French horn, which in those days was a constant accompaniment to the chase. I made no doubt that the pack was my uncle's, and drew up my horse with the purpose of suffering the hunters to pass without notice, aware that a hunting-field was not the proper scene to introduce myself to a keen sportsman, and determined, when they had passed on, to proceed to the mansion-house at my own pace, and there to await the return of the proprietor from his sport. I paused, therefore, on a rising ground, and, not unmoved by the sense of interest which that species of sylvan sport is so much calculated to inspire, (although my mind was not at the moment very accessible to impressions of this nature,) I expected with some eagerness the appearance of the huntsmen.

The fox, hard run, and nearly spent, first made his appearance from the copse which clothed the right-hand side of the valley. His drooping brush, his soiled appearance, and jaded trot, proclaimed his fate impending; and the carrion crow, which hovered over him, already considered poor Reynard as soon to be his prey. He crossed the stream which divides the little valley, and was dragging himself up a ravine on the other side of its wild banks, when the headmost hounds, followed by the rest of the pack at full cry, burst from the coppice, followed by the huntsman, and three or four riders. The

dogs pursued the trace of Reynard with unerring instinct; and the hunters followed with reckless haste, regardless of the broken and difficult nature of the ground. They were tall, stout young men, well mounted, and dressed in green and red, the uniform of a sporting association, formed under the auspices of old Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone. My cousins! thought I, as they swept past me. The next reflection was, what is my reception likely to be among these worthy successors of Nimrod? and how improbable is it, that I, knowing little or nothing of rural sports, shall find myself at ease, or happy, in my uncle's family. A vision that passed me interrupted these reflections.

It was a young lady, the loveliness of whose very striking features was enhanced by the animation of the chase and the glow of the exercise, mounted on a beautiful horse, jet black, unless where he was flecked by spots of the snow-white foam which embossed his bridle. She wore, what was then somewhat unusual, a coat, vest, and hat, resembling those of a man, which fashion has since called a riding-habit. The mode had been introduced while I was in France, and was perfectly new to me. Her long black hair streamed on the breeze, having in the hurry of the chase escaped from the ribbon which bound it. Some very broken ground, through which she guided her horse with the most admirable address and presence of mind, retarded her

course, and brought her closer to me than any of the other riders had passed. I had, therefore, a full view of her uncommonly fine face and person, to which an inexpressible charm was added by the wild gaiety of the scene, and the romance of her singular dress and unexpected appearance. As she past me, her horse made, in his impetuosity, an irregular movement, just while, coming once more upon open ground, she was again putting him to his speed. It served as an apology for me to ride close up to her, as if to her assistance. There was, however, no cause for alarm ; it was not a stumble, nor a false step ; and if it had, the fair Amazon had too much self-possession to have been deranged by it. She thanked my good intentions, however, by a smile, and I felt encouraged to put my horse to the same pace, and to keep in her immediate neighbourhood. The clamour of “ Whoop, dead, dead ! ” and the corresponding flourish of the French horn, soon announced to us that there was no more occasion for haste, since the chase was at a close. One of the young men whom we had seen approached us, waving the brush of the fox in triumph, as if to upbraid my fair companion.

“ I see,” she replied,—“ I see ; but make no noise about it ; if Phœbe,” she said, patting the neck of the beautiful animal on which she rode, “ had not got among the cliffs, you would have had little cause for boasting.”

They met as she spoke, and I observed them both look at me and converse a moment in an under tone, the young lady apparently pressing the sportsman to do something which he declined shyly, and with a sort of sheepish sullenness. She instantly turned her horse's head towards me, saying,—"Well, well, Thornie, if you wont, I must, that's all.—Sir," she continued, addressing me, "I have been endeavouring to persuade this cultivated young gentleman to make enquiries at you, whether, in the course of your travels in these parts, you have heard any thing of a friend of ours, one Mr Francis Osbaldistone, who has been for some days expected at Osbaldistone Hall?"

I was too happy to acknowledge myself to be the party enquired after, and to express my thanks for the obliging enquiries of the young lady.

"In that case, sir," she rejoined, "as my kinsman's politeness seems to be still slumbering, you will permit me (though I suppose it is highly improper) to stand mistress of ceremonies, and to present to you young Squire Thorncliff Osbaldistone, your cousin, and Die Vernon, who has also the honour to be your accomplished cousin's poor kinswoman."

There was a mixture of boldness, satire, and simplicity in the manner in which Miss Vernon pronounced these words. My knowledge of life was sufficient to enable me to take up a corresponding

tone as I expressed my gratitude to her for her condescension, and my extreme pleasure at having met with them. To say the truth, the compliment was so expressed, that the lady might easily appropriate the greater share of it, for 'Thorncliff' seemed an ar-rant country bumpkin, awkward, shy, and somewhat sulky withal. He shook hands with me, however, and then intimated his intention of leaving me that he might help the huntsman and his brothers to couple up the hounds, a purpose which he rather communicated by way of information to Miss Vernon than as apology to me.

" 'There he goes,' said the young lady, following him with eyes in which disdain was admirably painted,—“ the prince of grooms and cock-fighters, and blackguard horse-courers. But there is not one of them to mend another.—Have you read Markham ?” said Miss Vernon.

“ Read whom, ma'am ?—I do not even remember the author's name.”

“ O lud ! on what a strand are you wrecked ?—A poor forlorn and ignorant stranger, unacquainted with the very Aleoran of the savage tribe whom you are come to reside with—Never to have heard of Markham, the most celebrated author on farriery ! then I fear you are equally a stranger to the more modern names of Gibson and Bartlett ?”

“ I am, indeed, Miss Vernon.”

“ And do you not blush to own it ?—Why, we must forswear your alliance. Then, I suppose, you can neither give a ball, nor a mash, nor a horn ?”

“ I confess I trust all these matters to an ostler, or to my groom.”

“ Incredible carelessness !—And you cannot shoe a horse, or cut his mane and tail ; or worm a dog, or crop his ears, or cut his dew-claws ; or reclaim a hawk, or give him his casting-stones, or direct his diet when he is sealed ; or”——

“ To sum my insignificance in one word, I am profoundly ignorant in all these rural accomplishments.”

“ Then, in the name of heaven, Mr Francis Osbaldistone, what *can* you do ?”

“ Very little to the purpose, Miss Vernon ; something, however, I can pretend to—When my groom has dressed my horse, I can ride upon him, and when my hawk is in the field I can fly him.”

“ Can you do this ?” said the young lady, putting her horse to a canter.

There was a sort of rude over-grown fence crossed the path before us, with a gate, composed of pieces of wood rough from the forest ; I was about to move forward to open it, when Miss Vernon cleared the obstruction at a flying leap. I was bound, in point of honour, to follow, and was in a moment again at her side.

“ There are hopes of you yet,” she said. “ I was

afraid you had been a very degenerate Osbaldistone. But what on earth brings you to Cub-Castle?—for so the neighbours have christened this hunting-hall of ours. You might have staid away, I suppose, if you would?”

I felt I was by this time on a very intimate footing with my beautiful apparition, and therefore replied in a confidential undertone,—“ Indeed, my dear Miss Vernon, I might have considered it as a sacrifice to be a temporary resident in Osbaldistone Hall, the inmates being such as you describe them; but I am convinced there is one exception that will make amends for all deficiencies.”

“ O, you mean Rashleigh?” said Miss Vernon.

“ Indeed I do not; I was thinking—forgive me—of some person much nearer me.”

“ I suppose it would be proper not to understand your civility?—But that is not my way—I don’t make a curtsy for it, because I am sitting on horseback. But, seriously, I deserve your exception, for I am the only conversable being about the Hall, except the old priest and Rashleigh.”

“ And who is Rashleigh, for Heaven’s sake?”

“ Rashleigh is one who would fain have every one like him for his own sake.—He is Sir Hildebrand’s youngest son—about your own age, but not so—not well looking, in short. But Nature has given him a mouthful of common sense, and the priest has added a bushelfull of learning—he is

what we call a very clever man in this country, where clever men are scarce. Bred to the church, but in no hurry to take orders."

"To the Catholic Church?"

"The Catholic Church! what church else?— But I forgot, they told me you are a heretic. Is that true, Mr Osbaldistone?"

"I must not deny the charge."

"And yet you have been abroad, and in Catholic countries?"

"For nearly four years."

"You have seen convents?"

"Often; but I have not seen much in them which recommended the Catholic religion."

"Are not the inhabitants happy?"

"Some are unquestionably so, whom either a profound sense of devotion, or an experience of the persecutions and misfortunes of the world, or a natural apathy of temper, has led into retirement. Those who have adopted a life of seclusion from sudden and overstrained enthusiasm, or in hasty resentment of some disappointment or mortification, are very miserable. The quickness of sensation soon returns, and, like the wilder animals in a menagerie, they are restless under confinement, while others muse or fatten in cells of no larger dimensions than theirs."

"And what," continued Miss Vernon, "be-

comes of those victims who are condemned to a convent by the will of others? what do they resemble? especially, what do they resemble, if they are born to enjoy life, and feel its blessings?"

"They are like imprisoned singing-birds, condemned to wear out their lives in confinement, which they try to beguile by the exercise of accomplishments, which would have adorned society, had they been left at large."

"I shall be," returned Miss Vernon—"that is," said she, correcting herself,—"*I would be rather like the wild hawk, who, barred the free exercise of his soar through heaven, will dash himself to pieces against the bars of his cage. But to return to Rashleigh,*" said she, in a more lively tone, "*you will think him the pleasantest man you ever saw in your life, Mr Osbaldistone, that is for a week at least. If he could find out a blind mistress, never man would be so secure of conquest; but the eye breaks the spell that enchants the ear. But here we are in the court of the old hall, which looks as wild and old-fashioned as any of its inmates. There is no great toilette kept at Osbaldistone, you must know; but I must take off these things, they are so unpleasantly warm, and the hat hurts my forehead too,*" continued the lively girl, taking it off, and shaking down a profusion of sable ringlets, which, half laughing, half blushing, she

separated with her white slender fingers, in order to clear them away from her beautiful face and piercing hazel eyes. If there was any coquetry in the action, it was well disguised by the careless indifference of her manner. I could not help saying, "that, judging of the family from what I saw, I should suppose the toilette a very unnecessary care."

"That's very politely said; though, perhaps, I ought not to understand in what sense it was meant," replied Miss Vernon; "but you will see a better apology for a little negligence, when you meet the Orsons you are to live amongst, whose forms no toilette could improve. But, as I said before, the old dinner-bell will clang, or rather clank, in a few minutes—it cracked of its own accord at the day of the landing of King Willie, and my uncle, respecting its prophetic talent, would never permit it to be mended. So do you hold my palfrey, like a duteous knight, until I send some more humble squire to relieve you of the charge."

She threw me the rein as if we had been acquainted from our childhood, jumped from her saddle, tripped across the court-yard, and entered at a side-door, leaving me in admiration of her beauty, and astonished with the overfrankness of her manners, which seemed the more extraordinary, at a time when the dictates of politeness, flowing from the court of the Grand Monarque Louis

XIV., prescribed to the fair sex an unusual severity of decorum. I was left awkwardly enough stationed in the centre of the court of the old hall, mounted on one horse, and holding another in my hand. The building afforded little to interest a stranger, had I been disposed to consider it attentively ; the sides of the quadrangle were of various architecture, and with their stone-shafted latticed windows, projecting turrets, and massive architraves, resembled the inside of a convent, or of one of the older and less splendid colleges of Oxford. I called for a domestic, but was for some time totally unattended to ; which was the more provoking, as I could perceive I was the object of curiosity to several servants, both male and female, from different parts of the building, who popped out their heads and withdrew them, like rabbits in a warren, before I could make a direct appeal to the attention of any individual. The return of the huntsmen and hounds relieved me from my embarrassment, and with some difficulty I got one clown to relieve me of the charge of the horses, and another stupid boor to guide me to the presence of Sir Hildebrand. This service he performed with much such grace and good will, as a peasant who is compelled to act as guide to a hostile patrol ; and in the same manner I was obliged to guard against his deserting me in the labyrinth of low vaulted passages which conducted to “ Stun Hall,” as he

called it, where I was to be introduced to the gracious presence of my uncle.

We did, however, at length reach a long vaulted room, floored with stone, where a range of oaken tables, of a weight and size too massive ever to be moved aside, were already covered for dinner. This venerable apartment, which had witnessed the feasts of several generations of the Osbaldistone family, bore also evidence of their success in field-sports. Huge antlers of deer, which might have been the trophies of the hunting of Chevy Chace, were ranged around the walls, interspersed with the stuffed skins of badgers, otters, martins, and other animals of chace. Amidst some remnants of old armour, which had, perhaps, served against the Scotch, hung the more valued weapons of sylvan war, cross-bows, guns of various device and construction, nets, fishing-rods, otter-spears, hunting-poles, with many other singular devices and engines for taking or killing game. A few old pictures, dimmed with smoke, and stained with March beer, hung on the walls, representing knights and ladies, honoured, doubtless, and renowned in their day; those frowning fearfully from huge bushes of wig and of beard; and these looking delightfully with all their might at the roses which they brandished in their hands.

I had just time to give a glance at these matters,

when about twelve blue-coated servants burst into the hall with much tumult and talk, each rather employed in directing his comrades than in discharging his own duty. Some brought blocks and billets to the fire, which roared, blazed, and ascended, half in smoke, half in flame, up a huge tunnel, with an opening wide enough to accommodate a stone-seat within its ample vault, and which was fronted, by way of chimney-piece, with a huge piece of heavy architecture, where the monsters of heraldry, embodied by the art of some Northumbrian chisel, grinned and ramped in red free-stone, now japanned by the smoke of centuries. Others of these old-fashioned serving-men bore huge smoking dishes, loaded with substantial fare ; others brought in cups, flagons, bottles, yea barrels of liquor. All tramped, kicked, plunged, shouldered, and jostled, doing as little service with as much tumult as could well be imagined. At length, while the dinner was, after various efforts, in the act of being arranged upon the board, “ the clamour much of men and dogs,” the cracking of whips, calculated for the intimidation of the latter, voices loud and high, steps which, impressed by the heavy-heeled boots of the period, clattered like those in the statue of the *Festin de pierre*,* announced the arrival of

* Now called Don Juan.

those for whose benefit the preparations were made. The hubbub among the servants rather increased than diminished as this crisis approached,—some called to make haste,—others to take time,—some exhorted to stand out of the way, and make room for Sir Hildebrand and the young squires,—some to close round the table, and be *in* the way,—some to open, some to shut a pair of folding-doors, which divided the hall from a sort of gallery, as I afterwards learned, or withdrawing-room, fitted up with black wainscoat. Opened the doors were at length, and in rushed curs and men,—eight dogs, the domestic chaplain, the village doctor, my six cousins, and my uncle.

CHAPTER VI.

The rude hall rocks—they come, they come,—
The din of voices shakes the dome ;—
In stalk the various forms, and, drest
In varying morion, varying vest,
All march with haughty step—all proudly shake the crest.

PENROSE.

IF Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone was in no hurry to greet his nephew, of whose arrival he must have been informed for some time, he had important avocations to allege in excuse. “ Had seen thee sooner, lad,” he exclaimed, after a rough shake of the hand, and a hearty welcome to Osbaldistone Hall, “ but had to see the hounds kennelled first. Thou art welcome to the Hall, lad—here is thy cousin Percie, thy cousin Thornie, and thy cousin John—your cousin Dick, your cousin Wilfred, and—stay, where’s Rashleigh—aye, here’s Rashleigh—take thy long body aside, Thornie, and let’s see thy brother a bit—your cousin Rashleigh.—So, thy father has thought on the old Hall, and old Sir Hil-

debrand at last—better late than never—Thou art welcome, lad, and there's enough.—Where's my little Die?—aye, here she comes—this is my niece Die, my wife's brother's daughter—the prettiest girl in our dales, be the other who she may—and so now let's to the sirloin.”—

To gain some idea of the person who held this language, you must suppose, my dear Tresham, a man aged about sixty, in a hunting suit which had once been richly laced, but whose splendour had been tarnished by many a November and December storm. Sir Hildebrand, notwithstanding the abruptness of his present manner, had, at one period of his life, known courts and camps; had held a commission in the army which encamped on Hounslow Heath previous to the Revolution, and, recommended perhaps by his religion, had been knighted about the same period by the unfortunate and ill-advised James II. But his dreams of further preferment, if he ever entertained any, had died away at the crisis which drove his patron from the throne, and since that period he had spent a sequestered life upon his native domains. Notwithstanding his rusticity, however, Sir Hildebrand retained much of the exterior of a gentleman, and appeared among his sons as the remains of a Corinthian pillar, defaced and overgrown with moss and lichen, might have looked, if contrasted with the rough, unhewn masses of upright stones in

Stonhenge, or any other druidical temple. The sons were, indeed, heavy unadorned blocks as the eye would desire to look upon. Tall, stout, and comely, all and each of the five eldest seemed to want alike the Promethean fire of intellect, and the exterior grace and manner, which, in the polished world, sometimes supply mental deficiency. Their most valuable moral quality seemed to be the good-humour and content which was expressed in their heavy features, and their only pretence to accomplishment was their dexterity in the field-sports, for which alone they lived. The strong Gyas, and the strong Cloanthus, are not less distinguished by the poet, than the strong Percival, the strong Thorncliff, the strong John, Richard, Wilfred Osbaldistones, were by outward appearance.

But, as if to indemnify herself for a uniformity so uncommon in her productions, Dame Nature had rendered Rashleigh Osbaldistone a striking contrast in person and manner, and, as I afterwards learned, in temper and talents, not only to his brothers, but to most men whom I had hitherto met with. When Percie, Thornie, and Co. had respectively nodded, grinned, and presented their shoulder, rather than their hand, as their father named them to their new kinsman, Rashleigh stepped forward, and welcomed me to Osbaldistone Hall, with the air and manner of a man of this

world. His appearance was not in itself prepossessing. He was of low stature, whereas all his brethren seemed to be descendants of Anak ; and, while they were handsomely formed, Rashleigh, though strong in person, was bull-necked and cross-made, and, from some early injury in his youth, had an imperfection in his gait, so much resembling an absolute halt, that many alleged that it formed the obstacle to his taking orders ; the church of Rome, as is well known, admitting none to the clerical profession who labours under any personal deformity. Others, however, ascribed this unsightly defect to a mere awkward habit, and contended, that it did not amount to a personal disqualification from holy orders.

The features of Rashleigh were such, as, having looked upon, we in vain wish to banish from our memory, to which they recur as objects of painful curiosity, although we dwell upon them with a feeling of dislike, and even of disgust. It was not the actual plainness of his face, taken separately from the meaning, which made this strong impression. His features were, indeed, irregular, but they were by no means vulgar ; and his keen dark eyes, and shaggy eye-brows, redeemed his face from the charge of common-place ugliness. But there was in these eyes an expression of art and design, and, on provocation, a ferocity tempered by caution, which nature had made obvious to the most

ordinary physiognomist, perhaps with the same intention that she has given the rattle to the poisonous snake. As if to compensate him for these disadvantages of exterior, Rashleigh Osbaldistone was possessed of a voice the most soft, mellow, and rich in its tones that I ever heard, and was at no loss for language of every sort suited to so fine an organ. His first sentence of welcome was hardly ended, ere I internally agreed with Miss Vernon, that my new kinsman would make an instant conquest of a mistress whose ears alone were to judge his cause. He was about to place himself beside me at dinner, but Miss Vernon, who, as the only female in the family, arranged all such matters according to her own pleasure, contrived that I should sit betwixt Thorneliff and her, and it can scarce be doubted that I favoured this more advantageous arrangement.

“ I want to speak with you,” she said, “ and I have placed honest Thornie betwixt Rashleigh and you on purpose. He will be—

Featherbed 'twixt castle wall
And heavy brunt of cannon ball ;

while I, your earliest acquaintance in this intellectual family, ask of you how you like us all ?”

“ A very comprehensive question, Miss Vernon, considering how short while I have been at Osbaldistone Hall.”

“ O, the philosophy of our family lies on the surface—there are minute shades distinguishing the individuals, which require the eye of an intelligent observer ; but the species, as naturalists I believe call it, may be distinguished and characterized at once.”

“ My five elder cousins, then, are, I presume, of pretty nearly the same character.”

“ Yes, they form a happy compound of sot, game-keeper, bully, horse-jockey, and fool ; but, as they say there cannot be found two leaves on the same tree exactly alike, so these happy ingredients, being mingled in somewhat various proportions in each individual, make an agreeable variety for those who like to study character.”

“ Give me a sketch, if you please, Miss Vernon.”

“ You shall have them all in a family-piece, at full length—the favour is too easily granted to be refused. Percie, the son and heir, has more of the sot than of the game-keeper, bully, horse-jockey, or fool—My precious Thornie is more of the bully than the sot, game-keeper, jockey, or fool—John, who sleeps whole weeks amongst the hills, has most of the game-keeper—The jockey is most powerful with Dickon, who rides two hundred miles by day and night to be bought and sold at a horse-race—And the fool predominates so much over Wilfred’s other qualities, that he may be termed a fool positive.”

“ A goodly collection, Miss Vernon, and the individual varieties belong to a most interesting species. But is there no room on the canvass for Sir Hildebrand ?”

“ I love my uncle,” was her reply : “ I owe him some kindness, (such it was meant for at least,) and I will leave you to draw his picture yourself, when you know him better.”

“ Come,” thought I to myself, “ I am glad there is some forbearance. After all, who would have looked for such bitter satire from a creature so young and so exquisitely beautiful ?”

“ You are thinking of me,” she said, bending her dark eyes on me, as if she meant to pierce through my very soul.

“ I certainly was,” I replied with some embarrassment at the determined suddenness of the question, and then endeavouring to give a complimentary turn to my frank avowal. “ How is it possible I should think of anything else, seated as I have the happiness to be ?”

She smiled with such an expression of concentrated haughtiness as she alone could have thrown into her countenance. “ I must inform you at once, Mr Osbaldistone, that compliments are entirely lost upon me ; do not, therefore, throw away your pretty sayings—they serve fine gentlemen who travel in the country, instead of the toys, beads, and bracelets, which navigators carry to pro-

pitiate the savage inhabitants of newly discovered countries. Do not exhaust your stock in trade—you will find natives in Northumberland to whom your fine things will recommend you—on me they would be utterly thrown away, for I happen to know their real value.”

I was silenced and confounded.

“ You remind me at this moment,” said the young lady, resuming her lively and indifferent manner, “ of the fairy tale, where the man finds all the money which he had carried to market suddenly changed into pieces of slate. I have cried down and ruined your whole stock of complimentary discourse by one unlucky observation. But, come, never mind it—You are belied, Mr Osbaldistone, unless you have much better conversation than these *fadaurs*, which every gentleman with a toupet thinks himself obliged to recite to an unfortunate girl, merely because she wears silk and gauze, while he wears superfine cloth with embroidery. Your natural paces, as any of my five cousins might say, are far preferable to your complimentary amble. Endeavour to forget my unlucky sex : call me Tom Vernon, if you have a mind, but speak to me as you would to a friend and companion ; you have no idea how much I shall like you.”

“ That would be a bribe, indeed,” returned I.

“ Again !” replied Miss Vernon, holding up her finger : “ I told you I would not bear the

shadow of a compliment. And now, when you have pledged my uncle, who threatens you with what he calls a brimmer, I will tell you what you think of me."

The bumper being pledged by me, as a dutiful nephew, and some other general intercourse of the table having taken place, the continued and business-like clang of knives and forks, and the devotion of cousin Thorncliff on my right hand, and cousin Dickon, who sate on Miss Vernon's left, to the huge quantities of meat with which they heaped their plates, made them serve as two occasional partitions, separating us from the rest of the company, and leaving us to our *tête-a-tête*. "And now," said I, "give me leave to ask you frankly, Miss Vernon, what you suppose I am thinking of you?—I could tell you what I really *do* think, but you have interdicted praise."

"I do not want your assistance. I am conjuror enough to tell your thoughts without it. You need not open the casement of your bosom; I see through it. You think me a strange bold girl, half coquette, half romp; desirous of attracting attention by the freedom of her manners and loudness of her conversation, because she is ignorant of what the Spectator calls the softer graces of the sex; and perhaps you think I have some particular plan of storming you into admiration. I should be sorry to shock your self-opinion, but you were

never more mistaken. All the confidence I have reposed in you, I would have given as readily to your father, if I thought he could have understood me. I am in this happy family as much secluded from intelligent listeners as Sancho in the Sierra Morena, and when opportunity offers, I must speak or die. I assure you I would not have told you a word of all this curious intelligence, had I cared a pin who knew it or knew it not."

"It is very cruel in you, Miss Vernon, to take away all particular marks of favour from your communications, but I must receive them on your own terms.—You have not included Mr Rashleigh Osbaldistone in your domestic sketches."

She shrunk, I thought, at this remark, and hastily answered, in a much lower tone, "Not a word of Rashleigh! His ears are so acute when his selfishness is interested, that the sounds would reach him even through the mass of Thorncliff's person, stuffed as it is with beef, venison-pasty, and pudding."

"Yes," I replied; "but peeping past the living screen which divides us, before I put the question, I perceived that Mr Rashleigh's chair was empty—he has left the table."

"I would not have you be too sure of that," Miss Vernon replied. "Take my advice, and when you speak of Rashleigh, get up to the top of Otterscope-hill, where you can see for twenty miles

round you in every direction—stand on the very peak, and speak in whispers : and, after all, don't be too sure that the bird of the air shall not carry the matter. Rashleigh has been my tutor for four years : we are mutually tired of each other, and we shall heartily rejoice at our approaching separation."

" Mr Rashleigh leaves Osbaldistone-Hall, then?"

" Yes, in a few days :—did you not know that? —Your father must keep his resolutions much more secret than Sir Hildebrand. Why, when my uncle was informed that you were to be his guest for some time, and that your father desired to have one of his hopeful sons to fill up the lucrative situation in his counting-house, which was vacant by your obstinacy, Mr Francis, the good knight held a *cour pleniere* of all his family, including the butler, house-keeper, and game-keeper. This reverend assembly of the peers and household officers of Osbaldistone Hall was not convoked, as you may suppose, to elect your substitute, because, as Rashleigh alone possessed more arithmetic than was necessary to calculate the odds on a fighting-cock, none but he could be supposed qualified for the situation. But some solemn sanction was necessary for transforming Rashleigh's destination from starving as a Catholic priest, to thriving as a wealthy banker : and it was not without some reluctance that the acquiescence of

the assembly was obtained to such an act of degradation."

"I can conceive the scruples—but how were they got over?"

"By the general wish, I believe, to get Rashleigh out of the house," replied Miss Vernon. "Although youngest of the family, he has somehow or other got the entire management of all the others; and every one is sensible of the subjection, though they cannot shake it off. If any one opposes him, he is sure to rue having done so before the year goes about; and if you do him a very important service, you may rue it still more."

"At that rate," answered I, smiling, "I should look about me; for I have been the cause, however unintentionally, of his change of situation."

"Yes! and whether he regards it as an advantage or disadvantage, he will owe you a grudge for it—But here comes cheese, radishes, and a bumper to church and king, the hint for chaplains and ladies to disappear; and I, the sole representative of womanhood at Osbaldistone Hall, retreat, as in duty bound."

She vanished as she spoke, leaving me in astonishment at the mingled character of shrewdness, audacity, and frankness, which her conversation displayed. I despair conveying to you the least idea of her manner, although I have, as nearly as I can

remember, initiated her language. In fact, there was a mixture of untaught simplicity, as well as native shrewdness and haughty boldness in her manner, and all were modified and recommended by the play of the most beautiful features I had ever beheld. It is not to be thought that, however strange and uncommon I might think her liberal and unreserved communications, a young man of two-and-twenty was likely to be severely critical on a beautiful girl of eighteen, for not observing a proper distance towards him. On the contrary, I was equally diverted and flattered by Miss Vernon's confidence ; and that notwithstanding her declaration that it was conferred on me solely because I was the first auditor who occurred, of intelligence enough to comprehend it. With the presumption of my age, certainly not diminished by my residence in France, I imagined, that well-formed features, and a handsome person, both which I conceived myself to possess, were not unsuitable qualifications for the confidant of a young beauty. My vanity thus enlisted in Miss Vernon's behalf, I was far from judging her with severity, merely for a frankness which, I supposed, was in some degree justified by my own personal merit ; and the feelings of partiality, which her beauty, and the singularity of her situation, were of themselves calculated to excite, were enhanced

by my opinion of her penetration and judgment in her choice of a friend.

After Miss Vernon quitted the apartment, the bottle circulated, or rather flew around the table in unceasing revolution. My foreign education had given me a distaste to intemperance, then and yet too common a vice among my countrymen. The conversation which seasoned such orgies was as little to my taste, and, if anything could render it more disgusting, it was the relationship of the company. I therefore seized a lucky opportunity, and made my escape through a side-door, leading I knew not whither, rather than endure any longer the sight of father and sons practising the same degrading intemperance, and holding the same coarse and disgusting conversation. I was pursued, of course, as I had expected, to be reclaimed by force, as a deserter from the shrine of Bacchus. When I heard the whoop and hollo, and the tramp of the heavy boots of my pursuers on the winding stair which I was descending, I plainly foresaw I should be overtaken unless I could get into the open air. I therefore threw open a casement in the stair-case, which opened into an old-fashioned garden ; and, as the height did not exceed six feet, I jumped out without hesitation, and soon heard, far behind, the " hey whoop ! stole away ! stole away !" of my baffled pursuers. I ran down one alley, walked fast up an-

other ; and then, conceiving myself out of all danger of pursuit, I slackened my pace into a quiet stroll, enjoying the cool air which the heat of the wine I had been obliged to swallow, as well as that of my rapid retreat, rendered doubly grateful.

As I sauntered on, I found the gardener hard at his evening employment, and saluted him, as I paused to look at his work. “ Good even, my friend.”

“ Gude e’en—gude e’en t’ye,” answered the man, without looking up, and in a tone which at once indicated his northern extraction.

“ Fine weather for your work, my friend.”

“ It’s no that muckle to be compleened o’,” answered the man, with that limited degree of praise which gardeners and farmers usually bestow on the very best weather. Then raising his head, as if to see who spoke to him, he touched his Scotch bonnet with an air of respect, as he observed, “ Eh, gude safe us !—it’s a sight for sair een, to see a gold-laced jeistiecor in the Ha’ garden sac late at e’en.”

“ A gold-laced what, my good friend ?”

“ Ou a jeistiecor*—that’s a jacket like your ain, there. They hae other things to do wi’ them up

• Perhaps from the French *Justaucorps*.

yonder—unbuttoning them to make room for the beef and the bag-puddings, and the claret-wine, nae doubt—that's the ordinary for evening lecture on this side the Border."

"There's no such plenty of good cheer in your country, my good friend, as to tempt you to sit so late at it."

"Hout, sir, ye ken little about Scotland; it's no for want of good vivvers—the best of fish, flesh, and fowl hae we, by sybos, ingans, turneeps, and other garden fruit. But we hae mense and discretion, and are moderate of our mouths; but here, frae the kitchen to the ha', its fill and fetch mair frae the tae end of the four-and-twenty till the t'other. Even their fast days—they ca' it fasting when they hae the best o' fish frae Hartlepool and Sunderland by land carriage, forbye trouts, gilses, salmon, and a' the lave o't, and so they make their very fasting a kind of luxury and abomination; and then the awfu' masses and matins of the puir deceived souls—but I shouldna speak about them, for your honour will be a Roman, I'se warrant, like the lave."

"Not I, my friend; I was bred an English presbyterian, or dissenter."

"The right hand of fellowship to your honour, then," quoth the gardener, with as much alacrity as his hard features were capable of expressing, and,

as if to shew that his good will did not rest on words, he plucked forth a huge horn snuff-box, or mull, as he called it, and proffered me a pinch with a most fraternal grin.

Having accepted his courtesy, I asked him if he had been long a domestic at Osbaldistone Hall?

"I have been fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus," said he, looking towards the building, "for the best part of these four-and-twenty years, as sure as my name's Andrew Fairservice."

"But, my excellent friend Andrew Fairservice, if your religion and your temperance are so much offended by Roman rituals and southern hospitality, it seems to me that you must have been putting yourself to an unnecessary penance all this while, and that you might have found a service where they eat less, and are more orthodox in their worship. I dare say it cannot be want of skill which prevented your being placed more to your satisfaction."

"It disna become me to speak to the point of my qualifications," said Andrew, looking round him with great complacency; "but nae doubt I should understand my trade of horticulture, seeing I was bred in the parish of Dreepdaily, where they raise lang-kale under glass, and force the early nettles for their spring kale.—And, to speak truth, I hac been flitting every term these four-and-twenty

years ; but when the time comes, there's aye something to saw that I would like to see sawn,—or something to maw that I would like to see mawn,—or something to ripe that I would like to see ripen,—and sac I e'en daiker on wi' the family frae year's end to year's end. And I wad say for certain, that I am gaun to quit at Cannlemas, only I was just as positive on it twenty years syne, and I find mysel still turning up the moults here, for a' that. Forbye that, to tell your honour the even-down truth, there's nae better place ever offered to Andrew. But if your honour wad wush me to ony place where I wad hear pure doctrine, and hae a free cow's grass, and a cot, and a yard, and mair than ten pund's of annual fee, and where there's nae leddy about the town to count the apples, I'se hold mysel muckle indebted t'ye."

" Bravo, Andrew ; I perceive you'll lose no preferment for want of asking patronage."

" I canna see what for I should ; it's no a generation to wait till ane's worth's discovered, I trow."

" But you are no friend, I observe, to the ladies."

" Na, by my troth, I keep up the first garden-er's quarrel to them. They're fasheous bargains—aye crying for apriocks, pears, plums, and apples, summer and winter, without distinction o' seasons ; but we hae nae slices o' the spare rib here, be praised

for't ! except auld Martha, and she's weel aneugh pleased wi' the freedom o' the berry-bushes to her sister's weans, when they come to drink tea in a holiday in the house-keeper's room, and wi' a wheen codlings now and then for her ain private supper."

" You forget your young mistress."

" What mistress do I forget ?—whae's that ?"

" Your young mistress, Miss Vernon."

" What ! the lassie Vernon—She's nae mistress o' mine, man. I wish she was her ain mistress ; and I wish she mayna be some other body's mistress or it's lang—She's a wild slip that."

" Indeed !" said I, more interested than I cared to own to myself, or to show to this fellow—" why, Andrew, you know all the secrets of this family."

" If I ken them, I can keep them," said Andrew ; " they winna work in my wame like barm in a barrel, I'se warrant ye. Miss Die is—but it's neither beef nor brose o' mine."

And he began to dig with a great semblance of assiduity.

" What is Miss Vernon, Andrew ? I am a friend of the family, and should like to know."

" Other than a gude ane, I'm fearing," said Andrew, closing one eye hard, and shaking his head with a grave and mysterious look—" something glee'd—your honour understands me ?"

" I cannot say I do," said I, " Andrew ; but I should like to hear you explain yourself ;" and

therewithal I slipped a crown-piece into Andrew's horn-hard hand. The touch of the silver made him grin a ghastly smile, as he nodded slowly, and thrust it into his breeches pocket ; and then, like a man who well understood that there was value to be returned, stood up, and rested his arms on his spade, with his features composed into the most important gravity, as for some serious communication.

“ Ye maun ken, then, young gentleman, since it imports you to know, that Miss Vernon is——”

Here breaking off, he sucked in both his cheeks, till his lantern jaws and long chin assumed the appearance of a pair of nut-crackers ; winked hard once more, frowned, shook his head, and seemed to think his physiognomy had completed the information which his tongue had not fully told.

“ Good God !” said I, “ so young, so beautiful, so early lost !”

“ Troth, ye may say sae—she's in a manner lost, body and saul ; forbye being a papist, I'se uphaud her for”—and his northern caution prevailed, and he was again silent

“ For what, sir ?” said I, sternly. “ I insist on knowing the plain meaning of all this.”

“ Ou, just for the bitterest jacobite in the hail shire.”

“ Pshaw ! a jacobite ?—is that all ?”

Andrew looked at me with some astonishment,

at hearing his information treated so lightly ; and then muttering, “ It’s the warst thing I ken aboot the lassie, howsoe’er,” he resumed his spade, like the King of the Vandals, in Marmontel’s late novel.

CHAPTER VII.

Bardolph. The sheriff, with a monstrous watch, is at the door.

Henry IV. First Part.

I FOUND out with some difficulty the apartment which was destined for my accommodation ; and, having secured myself the necessary good-will and attention from my uncle's domestics, by using the means they were most capable of comprehending, I secluded myself there for the remainder of the evening, conjecturing, from the fair way in which I had left my new relatives, as well as from the distant noise which continued to echo from the stone-hall, (as their banquetting-room was called,) that they were not likely to be fitting company for a sober man.

What could my father mean by sending me to be an inmate in this strange family ? was my first and most natural reflection. My uncle, it was plain, received me as one who was to make some stay with him, and his rude hospitality rendered him as in-

different as King Hal to the number of those who fed upon his cost. But it was plain my presence or absence would be of as little importance in his eyes as that of one of his blue-coated serving-men. My cousins were mere cubs, in whose company I might, if I liked it, unlearn whatever decent manners, or elegant accomplishments, I had acquired, but where I could attain no information beyond what regarded worming dogs, rowelling horses, and following foxes. I could only imagine one reason, which was probably the true one. My father considered the life which was led at Osbaldistone Hall as the natural and inevitable pursuits of all country gentlemen, and he was desirous, by giving me an opportunity of seeing that with which he knew I should be disgusted, to reconcile me, if possible, to take an active share in his own business. In the meantime, he would take Rashleigh Osbaldistone into the counting-house. But he had an hundred modes of providing for him, and that advantageously, whenever he chose to get rid of him. So that, although I did feel a certain qualm of conscience at having been the means of introducing Rashleigh, being such as he was described by Miss Vernon, into my father's business—perhaps into his confidence—I subdued it by the reflection, that my father was complete master of his own affairs—a man not to be imposed upon, or influenced by any

one, and that all I knew to the young gentleman's prejudice was through the medium of a singular and giddy girl, whose communications were made with an injudicious frankness, which might warrant me in supposing her conclusions had been hastily or inaccurately formed. Then my mind naturally turned to Miss Vernon herself; her extreme beauty; her very peculiar situation, relying solely upon her reflections, and her own spirit, for guidance and protection; and her whole character offering that variety and spirit which piques our curiosity, and engages our attention in spite of ourselves. I had sense enough to consider the neighbourhood of this singular young lady, and the chance of our being thrown into very close and frequent intercourse, as adding to the dangers, while it relieved the dulness, of Osbaldistone Hall; but I could not, with the fullest exertion of my prudence, prevail upon myself to regret excessively this new and particular hazard to which I was to be exposed. This scruple I also settled as young men settle most difficulties of the kind—I would be very cautious, always on my guard, consider Miss Vernon rather as a companion than an intimate, and all would do well enough. With these reflections I fell asleep, Miss Vernon, of course, forming the last subject of my contemplation.

Whether I dreamed of her or not, I cannot satisfy you, for I was tired, and slept soundly. But

she was the first person I thought of in the morning, when waked at dawn by the cheerful notes of the hunting-horn. To start up, and direct my horse to be saddled, was my first movement; and in a few minutes I was in the court-yard, where men, dogs, and horses, were in full preparation. My uncle, who, perhaps, was not entitled to expect a very alert sportsman in his nephew, bred as he was in foreign parts, seemed rather surprised to see me, and I thought his morning salutation wanted something of the hearty and hospitable tone which distinguished his first welcome. "Art there, lad?—ay, youth's aye rathe—but look to thyself—mind the old song, lad—

‘ He that gallops his horse on Blackstone edge
May chance to catch a fall.’ ”

I believe there are few young men, and those very sturdy moralists, who would not rather be taxed with some moral peccadillo than with want of knowledge in horsemanship. As I was by no means deficient either in skill or courage, I resented my uncle's insinuation accordingly, and assured him he would find me up with the hounds.

"I doubtna, lad," was his reply; "thou'rt a rank rider, I'se warrant thee—but take heed. Thy father sent thee here to me to be bitted, and I doubt I must ride thee on the curb, or we'll hae

some one to ride thee on the halter, if I takena the better heed."

As this speech was totally unintelligible to me ; as, besides, it did not seem to be delivered for my use or benefit, but was spoken as it were aside, and as if expressing aloud something which was passing through the mind of my much-honoured uncle, I concluded it must either refer to my desertion of the bottle on the preceding evening, or that my uncle's morning hours being a little discomposed by the revels of the night before, his temper had suffered in proportion. I only made the passing reflection, that if he played the ungracious landlord, I would remain the shorter while his guest, and then hastened to salute Miss Vernon, who advanced cordially to meet me. Some show of greeting also passed between my cousins and me ; but as I saw then, maliciously bent upon criticizing my dress and accoutrements, from the cap to the stirrup-irons, and sneering at whatever had a new or foreign appearance, I exempted myself from the task of paying them much attention ; and assuming, in requital of their grins and whispers, an air of the utmost indifference and contempt, I attached myself to Miss Vernon as the only person in the party whom I could regard as a suitable companion. By her side, therefore, we sallied forth to the destined cover, which was a dingle or copse on the side of an extensive common. As we rode thi-

ther, I observed to Diana, that I did not see my cousin Rashleigh in the field ; to which she replied,—“ O no—he’s a mighty hunter, but it’s after the fashion of Nimrod, and his game is man.”

The dogs now brushed into the cover, with the appropriate encouragement from the hunters—all was business, bustle, and activity. My cousins were soon too much interested in the business of the morning to take any farther notice of me, unless that I overheard Dickon the horse-jockey whisper to Wilfred the fool—“ Look thou, an our French cousin be nat off a’ first burst.”

To which Wilfred answered, “ Like enow, for he has a queer outlandish binding on’s castor.”

Thorncliff, however, who, in his rude way, seemed not absolutely insensible to the beauty of his kinswoman, appeared determined to keep us company more closely than his brothers, perhaps to watch what passed betwixt Miss Vernon and me—perhaps to enjoy my expected mishaps in the chase. In the last particular he was disappointed. A fox was found, when, notwithstanding the ill-omened French binding upon my hat, I sustained my character as a horseman to the admiration of my uncle and Miss Vernon, and the secret disappointment of those who expected me to disgrace it. Reynard, however, after a hard burst of several miles, proved too wily for his pursuers, and the hounds were at fault. I could at this time observe in Miss Ver-

non's manner an impatience of the close attendance which we received from Thorncliff Osbaldistone ; and, as that active-spirited young lady never hesitated at taking the readiest means to gratify any wish of the moment, she said to him, in a tone of reproach—" I wonder, Thornie, what keeps you dangling at my horse's crupper all this morning, when you know the earths above Woolverton-mill are not stopt."

" I know no such an thing then, Miss Dic, for the miller swore himsel as black as night, that he stopt them at twelve o'clock, midnight that was."

" O fie upon you, Thornie, would you trust to a miller's word ?—and these earths, too, where we lost the fox three times this season, and you on you grey mare that can gallop there and back in ten minutes !"

" Well, Miss Dic, I'se go to Woolverton then, and if the earths are not stopped, I'se raddle Dick the miller's bones for him."

" Do, my dear Thornie ; horsewhip the rascal to purpose—via—fly away, and about it."—Thorncliff went off at the gallop—" or get horsewhipt yourself, which will serve my purpose just as well. —I must teach them all discipline and obedience to the word of command. I am raising a regiment, you must know. Thornie shall be my serjeant-major, Dickon my riding-master, and Wil-

fred, with his deep dub-a-dub tones, that speak but three syllables at a time, my kettle-drummer."

"And Rashleigh?"

"Rashleigh shall be my scout-master."

"And will you find no employment for me, most lovely colonel?"

"You shall have the choice of being pay-master, or plunder-master, to the corps. But see how the dogs puzzle about there. Come, Mr Frank, the scent's cold; they wont recover it there this while; follow me, I have a view to show you."

And, in fact, she cantered up to the top of a gentle hill, commanding an extensive prospect. Casting her eyes around, to see that no one was near us, she drew up her horse beneath a few birch trees, which screened us from the rest of the hunting field—"Do you see yon peaked, brown, heathy hill, having something like a whitish speck upon the side?"

"Terminating that long ridge of broken moorish uplands?—I see it distinctly."

"That whitish speck is a rock called Hawkesmore-crag, and Hawkesmore-crag is in Scotland."

"Indeed? I did not think we had been so near Scotland."

"It is so, I assure you, and your horse will carry you there in two hours."

"I shall hardly give him the trouble; why,

the distance must be eighteen miles as the crow flies."

"You may have my mare, if you think her less blown—I say, that in two hours you may be in Scotland."

"And I say, that I have so little desire to be there, that if my horse's head were over the Border, I would not give his tail the trouble of following. What should I do in Scotland?"

"Provide for your safety, if I must speak plainly. Do you understand me now, Mr Frank?"

"Not a whit; you are more and more oracular."

"Then, on my word, you either mistrust me most unjustly, and are a better dissembler than Rashleigh Osbaldistone himself, or you know nothing of what is imputed to you; and then no wonder you stare at me in that grave manner, which I can scarce see without laughing."

"Upon my word of honour, Miss Vernon," said I, with an impatient feeling of her childish disposition to mirth, "I have not the most distant conception of what you mean. I am happy to afford you any subject of amusement, but I am quite ignorant in what it consists."

"Nay, there's no sound jest after all," said the young lady, composing herself, "only one looks so very ridiculous when he is fairly perplexed; but

the matter is serious enough. Do you know one Moray, or Morris, or some such name?"

"Not that I can at present recollect."

"Think a moment—Did you not lately travel with somebody of such a name?"

"The only man with whom I travelled for any length of time, was a fellow whose soul seemed to lie in his portmanteau."

"Then it was like the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias, which lay among the ducats in his leathern purse. That man has been robbed, and he has lodged an information against you, 'as connected with the violence done to him."

"You jest, Miss Vernon!"

"I do not, I assure you—the thing is an absolute fact."

"And do you," said I, with strong indignation, which I did not attempt to suppress, "do you suppose me capable of meriting such a charge?"

"You would call me out for it, I suppose, had I the advantage of being a man—You may do so as it is, if you like it—I can shoot flying, as well as leap a five-barred gate."

"And are colonel of a regiment of horse besides," replied I, reflecting how idle it was to be angry with her—"But do explain the present jest to me!"

"There's no jest whatever," said Diana; "you

are accused of robbing this man, and my uncle believes it as well as I did."

"Upon my honour, I am greatly obliged to my friends for their good opinion."

"Now do not, if you can help it, snort, and stare, and snuff the wind, and look so exceedingly like a startled horse—There's no such offence as you suppose—you are not charged with any petty larceny, or vulgar felony—by no means. This fellow was carrying money from government, both specie and bills, to pay the troops in the north; and it is said he has been also robbed of some dispatches of great consequence."

"And so it is high treason, then, and not simple robbery, of which I am accused?"

"Certainly; which, you know, has been in all ages accounted the crime of a gentleman. You will find plenty in this country, and one not far from your elbow, who think it a merit to distress the Hanoverian government by every means possible."

"Neither my politics nor my morals, Miss Vernon, are of a description so accommodating."

"I really begin to believe that you are a presbyterian and Hanoverian in good earnest. But what do you propose to do?"

"Instantly to refute this atrocious calumny. Before whom," I asked, "was this extraordinary accusation laid?"

“ Before old Squire Inglewood, who had sufficient unwillingness to receive it. He sent tidings to my uncle, I suppose, that he might smuggle you away into Scotland, out of reach of the warrant. But my uncle is sensible that his religion and old predilections render him obnoxious to government, and that, were he caught playing booty, he would be disarmed, and probably dismounted, (which would be the worse evil of the two,) as a jacobite, papist, and suspected person.”

“ I can conceive that, sooner than lose his hunters, he would give up his nephew.”

“ His nephew, nieces, sons—daughters, if he had them, and whole generation,” said Diana ; “ therefore trust not to him, even for a single moment, but make the best of your way before they can serve the warrant.”

“ That I shall certainly do ; but it shall be to the house of this Squire Inglewood—which way does it lie ?”

“ About five miles off, in the low ground, behind yonder plantations—you may see the tower of the clock-house.”

“ I will be there in a few minutes,” said I, putting my horse in motion.

“ And I will go with you, and show you the way,” said Diana, putting her palfrey also to the trot.

“ Do not think of it, Miss Vernon ; it is not—

permit me the freedom of a friend—it is not proper, scarcely even delicate, in you to go with me upon such an errand as I am now upon.”

“ I understand your meaning,” said Miss Vernon, a slight blush crossing her haughty brow ;—“ it is plainly spoken,”—and after a moment’s pause she added, “ and I believe kindly meant.”

“ It is indeed, Miss Vernon ; can you think me insensible of the interest you show me, or ungrateful for it ?” said I, with even more interest than I could have wished to express. “ Your’s is meant for true kindness, shown best at the hour of need. But I must not, for your own sake—for the chance of misconstruction—suffer you to pursue the dictates of your generosity ; this is so public an occasion—it is almost like venturing into an open court of justice.”

“ And if it were not almost, but altogether entering into an open court of justice, do you think I would not go there if I thought it right, and wished to protect a friend ? You have no one to stand by you—you are a stranger ; and here, in the outskirts of the kingdom, country justices do odd things. My uncle has no desire to embroil himself in your affair ;—Rashleigh is absent, and were he here, there is no knowing which side he might take ; the rest are all more stupid and brutal one than another. I will go with you, and I do not fear being able to serve you. I am no fine

lady, to be terrified to death with law books, hard words, or big wigs."

"But, my dear Miss Vernon"——

"But, my dear Mr Francis, be patient and quiet, and let me take my own way ; for when I take the bit between my teeth, there is no bridle will stop me."

Flattered with the interest so lovely a creature seemed to take in my fate, yet vexed at the ridiculous appearance I should make, by carrying a girl of eighteen along with me as an advocate, and seriously concerned for the misconstruction to which her motives might be exposed, I endeavoured to combat her resolution to accompany me to Squire Inglewood's. The self-will'd girl told me roundly, that my dissuasions were absolutely in vain ; that she was a true Vernon, whom no consideration, not even that of being able to do but little to assist him, should induce to abandon a friend in distress ; and that all I could say on the subject might be very well for pretty, well-educated, well-behaved misses from a town boarding-school, but did not apply to her, who was accustomed to mind nobody's opinion but her own.

While she spoke thus, we were advancing hastily towards Inglewood-Place, while, as if to divert me from the task of farther remonstrance, she drew a ludicrous picture of the magistrate and his clerk. Inglewood was, according to her description, a

white-washed jacobite, that is, one who, having been long a non-juror, like most of the other gentlemen of the country, had lately qualified himself to act as a justice, by taking the oaths to government. "He had done so," she said, "in compliance with the urgent request of most of his brother squires, who saw, with regret, that the palladium of sylvan sport, the game-laws, were likely to fall into disuse for want of a magistrate who would enforce them; the nearest acting justice being the Mayor of Newcastle, and he, as being rather inclined to the consumption of the game when properly dressed, than to its preservation when alive, was more partial, of course, to the cause of the poacher than of the sportsman. Resolving, therefore, that it was expedient some one of their number should sacrifice the scruples of jacobitical loyalty to the good of the community, the Northumbrian country gentlemen imposed the duty on Inglewood, who, being very inert in most of his feelings and sentiments, might, they thought, comply with any political creed without much repugnance. Having thus procured the body of justice, they proceeded," continued Miss Vernon, "to attach to it a clerk, by way of soul, to direct and animate its movements. Accordingly, they got a sharp Newcastle attorney, called Jobson, who, to vary my metaphor, finds it a good thing enough to retail justice at the sign of Squire Inglewood, and, as his

own emoluments depend on the quantity of business which he transacts, he hooks in his principal for a great deal more employment in the justice line than the honest squire had ever bargained for ; so that no apple-wife within the circuit of ten miles can settle her account with a coster-monger without an audience of the reluctant Justice and his alert clerk, Mr Joseph Jobson. But the most ridiculous scenes occur when affairs come before him, like our business of to-day, having any colouring of politics. Mr Joseph Jobson (for which, no doubt, he has his own very sufficient reasons,) is a prodigious zealot for the protestant religion, and a great friend to the present establishment in church and state. Now, his principal, retaining a sort of instinctive attachment to the opinions which he professed openly, until he relaxed his political creed, with the patriotic view of enforcing the law against unauthorised destroyers of black-gamut, grouse, partridges, and hares, is peculiarly embarrassed when the zeal of his assistant involves him in judicial proceedings connected with his earlier faith ; and, instead of seconding his zeal, he seldom fails to oppose to it a double dose of indolence and lack of exertion. And this inactivity does not by any means arise from actual stupidity. On the contrary, for one whose principal delight is in eating and drinking, he is an alert, joyous, and lively old soul, which makes his assumed dulness the more

diverting. So you may see Jobson on such occasions, like a bit of a broken-down blood tit condemned to drag an overloaded cart, puffing, strutting, and spluttering, to get the Justice put in motion, while, though the wheels groan, creak, and revolve slowly, the great and preponderating weight of the vehicle fairly frustrates the efforts of the willing quadruped, and prevents its being brought into a state of actual progression. Nay more, the unfortunate poney, I understand, has been heard to complain, that this same car of justice, which he finds it so hard to put in motion on some occasions, can on others run fast enough down hill of its own accord, dragging his reluctant self backwards along with it, when anything can be done of service to Squire Inglewood's quondam friends. And then Mr Jobson talks big about reporting his principal to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if it were not for his particular regard and friendship for Mr Inglewood and his family."

As Miss Vernon concluded this whimsical description, we found ourselves in front of Inglewood-Place, a handsome, though old-fashioned building, which showed the consequence of the family.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Sir," quoth the Lawyer, "not to flatter ye.
You have as good and fair a battery
As heart could wish, and need not shame
The proudest man alive to claim."

BUTLER.

OUR horses were taken by a servant in Sir Hildebrand's livery, whom we found in the court-yard, and we entered the house. In the entrance-hall I was somewhat surprised, and my fair companion still more so, when we met Rashleigh Osbaldistone, who could not help shewing equal wonder at our rencontre.

"Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon, without giving him time to ask any question, "you have heard of Mr Francis Osbaldistone's affair, and you have been talking to the Justice about it?"

"Certainly," said Rashleigh composedly, "it has been my business here. I have been endeavouring," he said, with a bow to me, "to render my cousin what service I can. But I am sorry to meet him here."

“As a friend and relation, Mr Osbaldistone, you ought to have been sorry to have met me any where else, at a time when the charge of my reputation required me to be on this spot as soon as possible.”

“True ; but, judging from what my father said, I should have supposed a short retreat into Scotland—just till matters should be smoothed over in a quiet way”——

I answered with warmth, “That I had no prudential measures to observe, and desired to have nothing smoothed over ; on the contrary, I was come to enquire into a rascally calumny, which I was determined to probe to the bottom.”

“Mr Francis Osbaldistone is an innocent man, Rashleigh, and he demands an investigation of the charge against him, and I intend to support him in it.”

“You do, my pretty cousin ?—I should think, now, Mr Francis Osbaldistone was likely to be as effectually, and rather more delicately, supported by my presence than by your’s.”

“O certainly ; but two heads are better than one, you know.”

“Especially such a head as yours, my pretty Die,” advancing, and taking her hand with a familiar fondness, which made me think him fifty times uglier than nature had made him. She led him, however, a few steps aside ; they conversed in

an under voice, and she appeared to insist upon some request, which he was unwilling or unable to comply with. I never saw so strong a contrast betwixt the expression of two faces. Miss Vernon's from being earnest became angry. Her eyes and cheeks became more animated, her colour mounted, she clenched her little hand, and, stamping on the ground with her foot, seemed to listen with a mixture of contempt and indignation to the apologies, which, from his look of civil deference, his composed and respectful smile, his body rather drawing back than advanced, and other signs of look and person, I concluded him to be pouring out at her feet. At length she flung away from him, with "*I will have it so.*"

"It is not in my power—there is no possibility of it.—Would you think it, Mr Osbaldistone?" said he, addressing me——

"You are not mad?" said she, interrupting him.

"Would you think it?" said he, without attending to her hint—"Miss Vernon insists, not only that I know your innocence, (of which, indeed, it is impossible for any one to be more convinced) but that I must also be acquainted with the real perpetrators of the outrage on this fellow—if, indeed, such an outrage has been committed. Is this reasonable, Mr Osbaldistone?"

"I will not allow any appeal to Mr Osbaldis-

tone, Rashleigh," said the young lady ; " he does not know, as I do, the incredible extent and accuracy of your information on all points."

" As I am a gentleman, you do me more honour than I deserve."

" Justice, Rashleigh—only justice—and it is only justice which I expect at your hands."

" You are a tyrant, Diana," he answered, with a sort of sigh—" a capricious tyrant, and rule your friends with a rod of iron. Still, however, it shall be as you desire. But you ought not to be here—you know you ought not—you must return with me."

Then turning from Diana, who seemed to stand undecided, he came up to me in the most friendly manner, and said, " Do not doubt my interest in what regards you, Mr Osbaldistone. If I leave you just at this moment, it is only to act for your advantage. But you must use your influence with your cousin to return ; her presence cannot serve you, and must prejudice herself."

" I assure you, sir," I replied, " you cannot be more convinced of this than I ; I have urged Miss Vernon's return as anxiously as she would permit me to do."

" I have thought on it," said Miss Vernon, after a pause, " and I will not go till I see you safe out of the hands of the Philistines. Cousin Rashleigh, I dare say, means well ; but he and I know

each other well.—Rashleigh, I will NOT go ;—I know,” she added in a more soothing tone, “ my being here will give you more motive for speed and exertion.”

“ Stay, then, rash, obstinate girl,” said Rashleigh ; “ you know but too well to whom you trust ;” and hastening out of the hall, we heard his horse’s feet a minute afterwards in rapid motion.

“ Thank Heaven, he is gone !” said Diana.
“ And now, let us seek out the Justice.”

“ Had we not better call a servant ?”

“ O, by no means ; I know the way to his den—we must burst on him suddenly—follow me.”

I did follow her accordingly, as she tripped up a few gloomy steps, traversed a twilight passage, and entered a sort of anti-room, hung round with old maps, architectural elevations, and genealogical trees. A pair of folding-doors opened from this into Mr Inglewood’s sitting apartment, from which was heard the fag-end of an old ditty, chaunted by a voice which had been in its day fit for a jolly bottle-song.

“ O, in Skipton-in-Craven,
Is never a haven,

But many a day foul weather ;
And he that would say

A pretty girl nay,
I wish for his cravat a tether.”—

“Hey day!” said Miss Vernon, “the genial Justice must have dined already,—I did not think it had been so late.”

It was even so. Mr Inglewood’s appetite having been sharpened by his official investigations, he had ante-dated his meridian repast, having dined at twelve instead of one o’clock, then the general dining-hour in England. The various occurrences of the morning occasioned our arriving some time after this hour, to the justice the most important of the four-and-twenty, and he had not neglected the interval.

“Stay you here,” said Diana; “I know the house, and I will call a servant; your sudden appearance might startle the old gentleman even to choking;” and she escaped from me, leaving me uncertain whether I ought to advance or retreat. It was impossible for me not to hear some part of what past within the dinner apartment, and particularly several apologies for declining to sing, expressed in a dejected croaking voice, the tones of which, I conceived, were not entirely new to me.

“Not sing, sir? by our lady! but you must—What! you have cracked my silver-mounted cocoa-nut of sack, and tell me that you cannot sing!—Sir, sack will make a cat sing, and speak too; so up with a merry stave, or trundle yourself out of my doors—Do you think you are to take up all my

valuable time with your d—d declarations, and then tell me you cannot sing?"

"Your worship is perfectly in rule," said another voice, which, from its pert conceited accent, might be that of the clerk, "and the party must be conformable; he hath *canot* written on his face in court hand."

"Up with it, then," said the justice, "or, by St Christopher, you shall crack the cocoa-nut full of salt and water, according to the statute for such effect made and provided."

Thus exhorted and threatened, my quondam fellow-traveller, for I could no longer doubt that he was the recusant in question, uplifted, with a voice similar to that of a criminal singing his last psalm on the scaffold, a most doleful stave to the following effect :

" Good people all, I pray give ear,
A woful story you shall hear,
'Tis of a robber as stout as ever
Bade a true man stand and deliver.
With his foodle doo fa loodle loo.

" This knave, most worthy of a cord,
Being arm'd with pistol and with sword,
'Twixt Kensington and Brentford then
Did bolâly stop six honest men.
With his foodle doo, &c.

" These honest men did at Brentford dine,
Having drank each man his pint of wine,

When this bold thief, with many curses,
Did say, You dogs, your lives or purses.
With his foodle doo," &c.

I question if the honest men, whose misfortune is commemorated in this pathetic ditty, were more startled at the appearance of the bold thief, than the songster was at mine ; for, tired of waiting for some one to announce me, and finding my situation as a listener rather awkward, I presented myself to the company just as my friend Mr Morris, for such, it seems, was his name, was uplifting the fifth stave of his doleful ballad. The high note, with which the tune started, died away in a quaver of consternation, upon finding himself so near one whose character he supposed to be little less suspicious than that of the hero of his madrigal, and he remained silent, with a mouth gaping as if I had brought the Gorgon's head in my hand.

The Justice, whose eyes had closed under the influence of the somniferous lullaby of the song, started up in his chair as it suddenly ceased, and stared with wonder at the unexpected addition which the company had received, while his organs of sight were in abeyance. The clerk, as I conjectured him to be from his appearance, was also commoved, for, sitting opposite to Mr Morris, that honest gentleman's terror communicated itself to him, though he wotted not why.

I broke the silence of surprise occasioned by my abrupt entrance.—“ My name, Mr Inglewood, is Francis Osbaldistone ; I understand that some scoundrel has brought a complaint before you, charging me with being concerned in a loss which he says he has sustained.”

“ Sir,” said the Justice, somewhat peevishly, “ these are matters I never enter upon after dinner—there is a time for every thing, and a justice of peace must eat as well as other folks.”

The goodly person of Mr Inglewood, by the way, seemed by no means to have suffered by any fasts, whether in the service of the law or of religion.

“ I beg pardon for an ill-timed visit, sir ; but as my reputation is concerned, and as the dinner appears to be concluded”——

“ It is not concluded, sir,” replied the magistrate ; “ man requires digestion as well as food, and I protest I cannot have benefit from my victuals, unless I am allowed two hours of quiet leisure, intermixed with harmless mirth, and a moderate circulation of the bottle.”

“ If your honour will forgive me,” said Mr Jobson, who had produced and arranged his writing implements in the brief space that our conversation afforded ; “ as this is a case of felony, and the gentleman seems something impatient, the charge is *contra pacem domini regis*”——

“D—n *dominie regis*!” said the impatient Justice—“I hope it’s no treason to say so;—but it’s enough to make one mad to be worried in this way—have I a moment of my life quiet, for warrants, orders, directions, acts, bails, bonds, and recognisances?—I pronounce to you, Mr Jobson, that I shall send you and the justice-ship to the devil one of these days.”

“Your honour will consider the dignity of the office—one of the quorum and custos rotulorum, an office of which Sir Edward Coke wisely saith, ‘The whole Christian world hath not the like of it, so it be duly executed.’”

“Well,” said the Justice, partly reconciled by this eulogium on the dignity of his situation, and gulping down the rest of his dissatisfaction in a huge bumper of claret, “let us to this gear then, and get rid of it as fast as we can.—Here you, sir—you, Morris—you, knight of the sorrowful countenance—is this Mr Francis Osbaldistone the gentleman whom you charge with being art and part of felony?”

“I, sir?” replied Morris, whose scattered wits had hardly yet re-assembled themselves—“I charge nothing—I say nothing against the gentleman.”

“Then we dismiss your complaint, sir, that’s all, and a good riddance—Push about the bottle—Mr Osbaldistone, help yourself.”

Jobson; however, was determined that Morris should not back out of the scrape so easily. "What do you mean, Mr Morris?—Here is your own declaration—the ink scarce dried—and you would retract it in this scandalous manner!"

"How do I know," whispered the other, in a tremulous tone, "how many rogues are in the house to back him?—I have read of such things in Johnson's Lives of the Highwaymen. I protest the door opens"——

And it did open, and Diana Vernon entered—"You keep fine order here, Justice—not a servant to be seen or heard of."

"Ah!" said the Justice, starting up with an alacrity which shewed that he was not so engrossed by his devotions to Themis, or Comus, to forget what was due to beauty—"Ah, ha! Die Vernon, the heath-bell of Cheviot, and the blossom of the Border, come to see how the old bachelor keeps house—Art welcome, girl, as flowers in May."

"A fine, open, hospitable house you do keep, Justice, that must be allowed—not a soul to answer a visitor."

"Ah! the knaves, they reckoned themselves secure of me for a couple of hours—But why did you not come earlier?—Your cousin Rashleigh dined here, and ran away like a poltroon after the first bottle was out—But you have not dined—we'll

have something nice and lady-like—sweet and pretty, like yourself, tossed up in a trice.”

“ I can’t stay, Justice—I came with my cousin, Frank Osbaldistone, there, and I must shew him the way back again to the Hall, or he’ll lose himself in the wolds.”

“ Whew ! sits the wind in that quarter ?” enquired the Justice,

‘ She showed him the way, and she showed him the way,
She showed him the way to woo.’

What ! no luck for old fellows, then, my sweet bud of the wilderness ?”

“ None whatever, Squire Inglewood ; but if you will be a good kind Justice, and dispatch young Frank’s business, and let us canter home again, I’ll bring my uncle to dine with you next week, and we’ll expect merry doings.”

“ And you shall find them, my pearl of the Tyne—Zookers, lass, I never envy these young fellows their rides and scampers, unless when you come across me. But I must not keep you just now, I suppose ?—I am quite satisfied with Mr Francis Osbaldistone’s explanation—here has been some mistake, which can be cleared at greater leisure.”

“ Pardon me, sir,” said I, “ but I have not heard the nature of the accusation yet.”

“ Yes, sir,” said the clerk, who, at the appear-

ance of Miss Vernon, had given up the matter in despair, but who picked up courage to press farther investigation, on finding himself supported from a quarter whence assuredly he expected no backing —“ Yes, sir, and Dalton saith, That he who is apprehended as a felon shall not be discharged upon any man’s discretion, but shall be held either to bail or commitment, paying to the clerk of the peace the usual fees for recognisance or commitment.”

The Justice, thus goaded on, gave me at length a few words of explanation.

It seems the tricks which I had played to this man, Morris, had made a strong impression on his imagination ; for I found they had been arrayed against me in his evidence, with all the exaggeration which a timorous and heated imagination could suggest. It appeared also, that, on the day he parted from me, he had been stopped on a solitary spot, and eased of his beloved travelling-companion, the portmanteau, by two men, well mounted and armed, having their faces covered with vizards.

One of them, he conceived, had much of my shape and air, and in a whispering conversation which took place betwixt the free-booters, he heard the other apply to him the name of Osbaldistone. The declaration farther set forth, that, upon enquiring into the principles of the family so named, he, the said declarant, was informed, that they were

of the worst description, the family, in all its members, having been papists and jacobites, as he was given to understand by the dissenting clergyman at whose house he stopped after his rencontre, since the days of William the Conqueror.

Upon all, and each of these weighty reasons, he charged me with being accessory to the felony committed upon his person; he, the said declarant, then travelling in the special employment of government, and having charge of certain important papers, and also a large sum in specie, to be paid over, according to his instructions, to certain persons of official trust and dignity in Scotland.

Having heard this extraordinary accusation, I replied to it, that the circumstances on which it was founded were such as could warrant no justice, or magistrate, in any attempt on my personal liberty. I admitted that I had practised a little upon the terrors of Mr Morris, while we travelled together, but in such trifling particulars as could have excited apprehension in no one who was one whit less timorous and jealous than himself. But I added, that I had never seen him since we parted, and if that which he feared had really come upon him, I was in no ways accessory to an action so unworthy of my character and station in life. That one of the robbers was called Osbaldistone, or that such a name was mentioned in the course of the conversation betwixt them, was a trifling circumstance, to

which no weight was due. And concerning the disaffection alleged against me, I was willing to prove, to the satisfaction of the Justice, the clerk, and even the witness himself, that I was of the same persuasion as his friend the dissenting clergyman ; had been educated as a good subject upon the principles of the Revolution, and as such now demanded the personal protection of the laws which had been assured by that great event.

The Justice fidgetted, took snuff, and seemed considerably embarrassed, while Mr Attorney Jobson, with all the volubility of his profession, ran over the statute of the 34 Edward III., by which justices of the peace are allowed to arrest all those whom they find by indictment or suspicion, and to put them into prison. The rogue even turned my own admissions against me, alleging, “ that since I had confessedly, upon my own shewing, assumed the bearing or deportment of a robber or malefactor, I had voluntarily subjected myself to the suspicions of which I complained, and brought myself within the compass of the act; having wilfully clothed my conduct with all the colour and livery of guilt.”

I combatted both his arguments and his jargon with much indignation and scorn, and observed, “ that I should, if necessary, produce the bail of my relations, which I conceived could not be re-

fused, without subjecting the magistrate in a misdemeanour."

"Pardon me, my good sir,—pardon me," said the insatiable clerk, "this is a case in which neither bail nor mainprize can be received, the felon who is liable to be committed on heavy grounds of suspicion, not being replevisable under the statute of the 5d of King Edward, there being in that act an express exception of such as be charged of emmendment, or force, and aid of felony done;" and he hinted, that his worship would do well to remember that such were no way replevisable by common writ, nor without writ.

At this period of the conversation a servant entered, and delivered a letter to Mr Jobson. He had no sooner run it hastily over, than he exclaimed, with the air of one who wished to appear much vexed at the interruption, and felt the consequence attached to a man of multifarious avocations—"Good God!—why, at this rate, I shall have neither time to attend to the public concerns nor my own—no rest—no quiet—I wish to Heaven another gentleman in our line would settle here!"

"God forbid!" said the Justice, in a tone of *sotto-voce* deprecation; "some of us have enough of one of the tribe."

"This is a matter of life and death, if your worship pleases."

“ In God’s name ! no more justice business, I hope,” said the alarmed magistrate.

“ No—no,” replied Mr Jobson, very consequentially ; “ old Gaffer Rutledge of Grime’s-hill, is subpœna’d for the next world ; he has sent an express for Dr Kill-down to put in bail—another for me to arrange his worldly affairs.”

“ Away with you, then,” said Mr Inglewood hastily ; “ his may not be a replevisable case under the statute, you know, or Mr Justice Death may not like the doctor for a *main pernor*, or bailman.”

“ And yet,” said Jobson, lingering as he moved towards the door, “ if my presence here be necessary—I could make out the warrant for committal in a moment, and the constable is below—And you have heard,” he said, lowering his voice, “ Mr Rashleigh’s opinion”—the rest was lost in a whisper.

The Justice replied aloud, “ I tell thee no, man, no—we’ll do nought till thou return, man, ’tis but a four-mile ride—Come, push bottle, Mr Morris—Don’t be cast down, Mr Osbaldistone—And you, my rose of the wilderness—one cup of claret to refresh the bloom of your cheeks.”

Diana started, as if from a reverie, in which she appeared to have been plunged while we held this discussion. “ No, Justice, I should be afraid of transferring the bloom to a part of my face where it would show to little advantage. But I will

pledge you in a cooler beverage;" and, filling a glass with water, she drank it hastily, while her hurried manner belied her assumed gaiety.

I had not much leisure to make remarks upon her demeanour, however, being full of vexation at the interference of fresh obstacles to an instant examination of the disgraceful and impertinent charge which was brought against me. But there was no moving the Justice to take the matter up in absence of his clerk, an incident which gave him apparently as much pleasure as a holiday to a schoolboy. He persisted in his endeavours to inspire jollity into a company, the individuals of which, whether considered with reference to each other, or to their respective situations, were by no means inclined to mirth. "Come, Master Morris, you're not the first man that's been robbed, I trow—grieving ne'er brought back loss, man.—And you, Mr Frank Osbaldistone, are not the first bully-boy that has said stand to a true man. There was Jack Winterfield, in my young days, kept the best company in the land—at horse-races and cock-fights who but he—hand and glove was I with Jack.—Push bottle, Mr Morris, it's dry talking—Many quart bumpers have I cracked, and thrown many a merry main with poor Jack—good family—ready wit—quick eye—as honest a fellow, barring the deed he died for—we'll drink to his memory, gentlemen—Poor Jack Winterfield—And since we talk of him,

and of these sort of things, and since that d—d clerk of mine has taken his gibberish elsewhere, and since we're snug among ourselves, Mr Osbaldistone, if you will have my best advice, I would take up this matter—the law's hard—very severe—hanged poor Jack Winterfield at York, despite family connections and great interest—all for easing a fat west country grazier of the price of a few beasts—Now, here is honest Mr Morris has been frightened, and so forth—D—n it, man, let the poor fellow have back his portmanteau, and end the frolic at once."

Morris's eyes brightened up at this suggestion, and he began to hesitate forth an assurance that he thirsted for no man's blood, when I cut the proposed accommodation short, by resenting the Justice's suggestion as an insult, that went directly to suppose me guilty of the very crime which I had come to his house with the express intention of disavowing. We were in this awkward predicament, when a servant, opening the door, announced "a strange gentlemen to wait upon his honour;" and the party whom he thus described entered the room without farther ceremony.

CHAPTER IX.

One of the thieves come back again ! I'll stand close.
He dares not wrong me now, so near the house,
And call in vain 'tis, till I see him offer it.

The Widow.

“ A STRANGER ! ” echoed the Justice,—“ not upon business, I trust, for I'll be”——

His protestation was cut short by the answer of the man himself. “ My business is of a nature somewhat onerous and particular,” said my acquaintance Mr Campbell,—for it was he, the very Scotchman whom I had seen at Northallerton,—“ and I must solicit your honour to give instant and heedful consideration to it.—I believe, Mr Morris,” he added, fixing his eye on that person with a look of peculiar firmness and almost ferocity—“ I believe ye ken brawly what I am—I believe ye cannot have forgotten what passed at our last meeting on the road.” Morris's jaw dropped—his countenance became the colour of tallow—his teeth chattered, and he gave visible signs of

the utmost consternation. "Take heart of grace, man," said Campbell, "and dinna sit clattering your jaws there like a pair of castanets. I think there can be nae difficulty in your telling Mr Justice, that ye have seen me of yore, and ken me to be a cavalier of fortune, and a man of honour.—Ye ken fu' weel ye will be some time resident in my vicinity, when I may have the power, as I will possess the inclination, to do you as good a turn."

"Sir—sir—I believe you to be a man of honour, and, as you say, a man of fortune. Yes, Mr Inglewood," he added, clearing his voice, "I really believe this gentleman to be so."

"And what's this gentleman's commands with me?" said the Justice, somewhat peevishly. "One man introduces another, like the rhymes in the 'house that Jack built,' and I get company without either peace or conversation!"

"Both shall be your's, sir," answered Campbell, "in a brief period of time. I come to release your mind from a piece of troublesome duty, not to make increment to it."

"Body o' me! then you are welcome as ever Scot was to England; but get on, man, let's hear what you have got to say at once."

"I presume this gentleman," continued the North Briton, "told you there was a person of the

name of Campbell with him, when he had the mischance to lose his valise?"

"He has not mentioned such a name, from beginning to end of the matter," said the Justice.

"Ah! I conceive—I conceive," replied Mr Campbell; "ye were kindly afear'd of committing a stranger into collision wi' the judicial forms of the country; but as I understand my evidence is necessary to the compurgation of ane honest gentleman here, Mr Francis Osbaldistone, wha has been most unjustly suspected, I will dispense with the precaution—Ye will, therefore, please tell Mr Justice Inglewood, whether we did not travel several miles together on the road, in consequence of your own anxious request and suggestion, reiterated ance and again, baith on the evening that we were at Northallerton, and there declined by me, but afterwards accepted, when I overtook ye on the road near Clobber Allers, and was prevailed on by you to resign my ain intentions of proceeding to Rothbury; and, for my misfortune, to accompany you on your proposed route."

"It's a melancholy truth," answered Morris, holding down his head, as he gave this general assent to the long and leading question which Campbell put to him, and to which he assented with rueful docility.

"And I presume you can also asseverate to his

worship, that no man is better qualified than I am to bear testimony in this case, seeing that I was by you, and near you, constantly during the whole occurrence?"

"No man better qualified, certainly," said Morris, with a deep and embarrassed sigh.

"And why the devil did you not assist him then," said the Justice, "since, by Mr Morris's account, there were but two robbers; so you were two to two, and you are both stout likely men?"

"Sir, if it please your worship," said Campbell, "I have been all my life a man of peace and quietness, no ways given to broils or batteries. Mr Morris, who belongs, as I understand, or hath belonged, to his Majesty's army, might have used his pleasure in resistance, he travelling, as I also understand, with a great charge of treasure; but for me, who had but my own small peculiar to defend, and who am, moreover, a man of a pacific occupation, I was unwilling to commit myself to hazard in the matter."

I looked at Campbell as he uttered these words, and never recollect to have seen a more singular contrast than that between the strong daring sternness expressed in his harsh features, and the air of composed meekness and simplicity which his language assumed. There was even a slight ironical smile lurking about the corners of his mouth, which seemed, involuntarily as it were, to intimate his

disdain of the quiet and peaceful character which he thought proper to assume, and which led me to entertain strange suspicions that his concern in the violence done to Morris had been something very different from that of a fellow-sufferer, or even of a mere spectator.

Perhaps some such suspicions crossed the Justice's mind at the moment, for he exclaimed, as if by way of ejaculation, "Body o' me! but this is a strange story."

The North Briton seemed to guess at what was passing in his mind; for he went on, with a change of manner and tone, dismissing from his countenance some part of the hypocritical affectation of humility which had made him obnoxious to suspicion, and saying, with a more frank and unconstrained air, "To say the truth, I am just ane o' these canny folks wha care not to fight, but when they hae gotten something to fight for, which did not chance to be my predicament when I fell in wi' these loons. But, that your worship may know that I am a person of good fame and character, please to cast your eye over that billet."

Mr Inglewood took the paper from his hands, and read half aloud, "These are to certify, that the bearer, Robert Campbell of ——— of some place which I cannot pronounce," interjected the Justice,— "is a person of good lineage, and peaceable demeanour, travelling towards England on

his own proper affairs, &c. &c. &c. Given under our hand, at our Castle of Inver—Invera—rara—**ARGYLE.**”

“ A slight testimonial, sir, which I thought fit to impetrate from that worthy nobleman, (here he raised his hand to his head, as if to touch his hat,) **MacCallum More.**”

“ **MacCallum** who, sir ?” said the Justice.

“ Whom the Southern call the **Duke of Argyle.**”

“ I know the **Duke of Argyle** very well to be a nobleman of great worth and distinction, and a true lover of his country. I was one of those that stood by him in 1714, when he unhorsed the **Duke of Marlborough** out of his command. I wish we had more noblemen like him. He was an honest Tory in these days, and hand and glove with **Ormond**. And he has acceded to the present government, as I have done myself, for the peace and quiet of his country ; for I cannot presume that great man to have been actuated, as violent folks pretend, with the fear of losing his places and regiment. His testimonial, as you call it, **Mr Campbell**, is perfectly satisfactory ; and now, what have you got to say to this matter of the robbery ?”

“ Briefly this, if it please your worship : that **Mr Morris** might as weel charge it against the babe yet to be born, or against myself even, as against this young gentleman, **Mr Osbaldistone** ; for I am not only free to depone that the person for whom

he took him was a shorter man, and a thicker man, but also, for I chanced to obtain a glisk of his visage, as his fause-face slipped aside, that he was a man of other features and complexion than those of this young gentleman, Mr Osbaldistone. And I believe," he added, turning round with a natural, yet somewhat sterner air, to Mr Morris, "that the gentleman will allow I had better opportunity to take cognizance wha were present on that occasion than he, being, I believe, much the cooler o' the twa."

"I agree to it, sir—I agree to it perfectly," said Morris, shrinking back, as Campbell moved his chair towards him to fortify his appeal—"And I incline, sir," he added, addressing Mr Inglewood, "to retract my information as to Mr Osbaldistone; and I request, sir, you will permit him, sir, to go about his business, and me to go about mine also; your worship may have business to settle with Mr Campbell, and I am rather in haste to be gone."

"Then, there go the declarations," said the Justice, throwing them into the fire—"And now you are at perfect liberty, Mr Osbaldistone—And you, Mr Morris, are set quite at your case."

"Ay," said Campbell, cyeing Morris as he assented with a rueful grin to the Justice's observations, "much like the case of a toad under a pair of harrows—But fear nothing, Mr Morris; you and I maun leave the house thegither. I will see

you safe—I hope you will not doubt my honour, when I say sae—to the next highway, and then we part company; and if we do not meet as friends in Scotland, it will be your ain fault.”

With such a lingering look of terror as the condemned criminal throws, when he is informed that the cart awaits him, Morris arose; but when on his legs appeared to hesitate. “I tell thee, man, fear nothing,” reiterated Campbell; “I will keep my word with you—Why, thou sheep’s-heart, how do ye ken but we may can pick up some speerings of your valise, if ye will be amenable to gude counsel?—Our horses are ready.—Bid the Justice fareweel, man, and show your southern breeding.”

Morris, thus exhorted and encouraged, took his leave, under the escort of Mr Campbell; but, apparently, new scruples and terrors had struck him before they left the house, for I heard Campbell reiterating assurances of safety and protection as they left the anti-room—“By the soul of my body, man, thou’rt as safe as in thy father’s kail-yard—Zounds! that a chield wi’ sic a black beard, should hae nae mair heart than a hen-partridge—Come on wi’ ye, like a frank fallow, anes and for aye.”

The voices died away, and the subsequent tramping of their horses announced to us that they had left the mansion of Justice Inglewood.

The joy which that worthy magistrate received at this easy conclusion of a matter which threaten-

ed him with some trouble in his judicial capacity, was somewhat damped by reflection on what his clerk's views of the transaction might be at his return. "Now, I shall have Jobson on my shoulders about these d——d papers—I doubt I should not have destroyed them after all—But, hang it, it is only paying his fees, and that will make all smooth—And now, Miss Die Vernon, though I have liberated all the others, I intend to sign a writ for committing you to the custody of Mother Blakes, my old housekeeper, for the evening, and we will send for my neighbour Mrs Musgrave, and the Miss Dawkins, and your cousins, and have old Cobs the fiddler, and be as merry as the maids; and Frank Osbaldistone and I will have a carouse that will make us fit company for you in half an hour."

"Thanks, most worshipful," returned Miss Vernon; "but, as matters stand, we must return instantly to Osbaldistone Hall, where they do not know what has become of us, and relieve my uncle of his anxiety on my cousin's account, which is just the same as if one of his own sons were concerned."

"I believe it truly," said the Justice; "for when his eldest son, Archie, came to a bad end, in that unlucky affair of Sir John Fenwick's, old Hildebrand used to hollow out his name as readily as any of the remaining five, and then complain

that he could not recollect which of his sons had been hanged. So, pray hasten home, and relieve his paternal solicitude, since go you must.—But, hark thee hither, heath-blossom,” he said, pulling her towards him by the hand, and in a good-humoured tone of admonition, “another time let the law take its course, without putting your pretty finger into her old musty pye, all full of fragments of law-Latin—French and dog-Latin—And, Die, my beauty, let young fellows show each other the way through the moors, in case you should lose your own road, while you are pointing out theirs, my pretty Will o’ the Wisp.”

With this admonition, he saluted and dismissed Miss Vernon, and took an equally kind farewell of me.

“Thou seems to be a good tight lad, Mr Frank, and I remember thy father too—he was my play-fellow at school. Hark thee, lad, ride early at night, and don’t swagger with chance passengers on the king’s highway. What, man! all the king’s liege subjects are not bound to understand joking, and it’s ill cracking jests on matters of felony. And here’s poor Die Vernon too—in a manner alone and deserted on the face of this wide earth, and left to ride, and run, and scamper at her own silly pleasure. Thou must be careful of Die, or egad, I will turn a young fellow again on purpose, and fight thee myself, although I must own it would

be a great deal of trouble. And now, get ye both gone, and leave me to my pipe of tobacco, and my meditations ; for what says the song—

“ The Indian leaf doth briefly burn ;
So doth man’s strength to weakness turn ;—
The fire of youth extinguish’d quite,
Comes age, like embers, dry and white.
Think of this as you take tobacco.”

I was much pleased with the gleams of sense and feeling which escaped from the Justice through the vapours of sloth and self-indulgence, assured him of my respect to his admonitions, and took a friendly farewell of the honest magistrate and his hospitable mansion.

We found the same servant of Sir Hildebrand who had taken our horses at our entrance, and who had been directed, as he informed Miss Vernon, by Mr Rashleigh, to wait and attend upon us home. We rode a little way in silence, for, to say truth, my mind was too much bewildered with the events of the morning to permit me to be the first to break it. At length Miss Vernon exclaimed, as if giving vent to her own reflections, “ Well, Rashleigh is a man to be feared and wondered at, and all but loved ; he does whatever he pleases, and makes all others his puppets—has a player ready to perform every part which he ima-

gines, and an invention and readiness which supply expedients for every emergency."

"You think, then," said I, answering rather to her meaning, than to the express words she made use of, "that this Mr Campbell, whose appearance was so opportune, and who trussed up and carried off my accuser as a falcon trusses a partridge, was an agent of Mr Rashleigh Osbaldistone's?"

"I do guess as much," replied Diana, "and shrewdly suspect, moreover, that he would hardly have appeared so very much in the nick of time, if I had not happened to meet Rashleigh in the hall at the Justice's."

"In that case, my thanks are chiefly due to you, my fair preserver."

"To be sure they are," returned Diana; "and pray, suppose them paid, and accepted with a gracious smile, for I do not care to be troubled with hearing them in good earnest, and am much more likely to yawn than to behave becoming. In short, Mr Frank, I wished to serve you, and I have fortunately been able to do so, and have only one favour to ask in return, and that is, that you will say no more about it.—But who comes here to meet us, 'bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste?' It is the subordinate man of law, I think, no less than Mr Joseph Jobson."

And Mr Joseph Jobson it proved to be, in great haste, and, as it speedily appeared, in most extreme

bad humour. He came up to us, and stopped his horse, as we were about to pass with a slight salutation.

“ So, sir—so, Miss Vernon—ay—I see well enough how it is—bail put in during my absence, I suppose—I should like to know who drew the recognizance, that’s all. If his worship uses this form of procedure often, I advise him to get another clerk, that’s all, for I shall certainly demit.”

“ Or suppose he get his present clerk stitched to his sleeve, Mr Jobson,” said Diana, “ would not that do as well ? And pray how does Farmer Rutledge, Mr Jobson, I hope you found him able to sign, seal, and deliver ?”

This question seemed greatly to increase the wrath of the man of law. He looked at Miss Vernon with such an air of spite and resentment, as laid me under a strong temptation to knock him off his horse with the butt of my whip, which I only suppressed in consideration of his insignificance.

“ Farmer Rutledge, ma’am ?” said the clerk, so soon as his indignation permitted him to articulate, “ Farmer Rutledge is in as handsome enjoyment of his health as you are—it’s all a bam, ma’am—all a bamboozle and a b’te that affair of his illness ; and if you did not know as much before, you know it now, ma’am.”

“ La you there now !” replied Miss Vernon,

with an affectation of extreme and simple wonder, “sure you don’t say so, Mr Jobson?”

“But I *do* say so, ma’am,” rejoined the incensed scribe; “and moreover I say, that the old miserly clod-breaker called me pettifogger—pettifogger, ma’am—and said I came to hunt for a job, ma’am—which I have no more right to have said to me than any other gentleman of my profession, ma’am—especially as I am clerk to the peace, having and holding said office under *Trigesimo Septimo Henrij Octavi*, and *Primo Gulielmi*,—the first of King William, ma’am, of glorious and immortal memory—our immortal deliverer from papists and pretenders, and wooden shoes and warming pans, Miss Vernon.”

“Sad things, these wooden shoes and warming pans,” retorted the young lady, who seemed to take pleasure in augmenting his wrath;—“and it is a comfort you don’t seem to want a warming pan at present, Mr Jobson. I am afraid Gaffer Rutledge has not confined his incivility to language—Are you sure he did not give you a beating?”

“Beating, ma’am!—no”—(very shortly) “no man alive shall beat me, I promise you, ma’am.”

“That is according as you happen to merit, sir,” said I; “for your mode of speaking to this young lady is so unbecoming, that, if you do not change your tone, I shall think it worth while to chastise you myself.”

“ Chastise, sir ? and—me, sir ?—Do you know whom you speak to, sir ? ”

“ Yes, sir,” I replied ; “ you say yourself you are clerk of peace to the county ; and Gaffer Rutledge says you are a pettifogger ; and in neither capacity are you entitled to be impertinent to a young lady of fashion.”

Miss Vernon laid her hand on my arm, and exclaimed, “ Come, Mr Osbaldistone, I will have no assaults and battery on Mr Jobson ; I am not in sufficient charity with him to permit a single touch of your whip—why, he would live on it for a term at least. Besides, you have already hurt his feelings sufficiently—you have called him impertinent.”

“ I don't value his language, Miss,” said the clerk, somewhat crest-fallen ; “ besides, impertinent is not an actionable word ; but pettifogger is slander in the highest degree, and that I will make Gaffer Rutledge know to his cost, and all who maliciously repeat the same to the breach of the public peace, and the taking away of my private good name.”

“ Never mind that, Mr Jobson,” said Miss Vernon ; “ you know, where there is nothing, your own law allows that the king himself must lose his rights ; and, for the taking away of your good name, I pity the poor fellow who gets it, and wish you joy of losing it with all my heart.”

“ Very well, ma’am—good evening, ma’am—I have no more to say—only there are laws against papists, which it would be well for the land were they better executed. There’s third and fourth Edward VI., of antiphoners, missalls, grailes, processionals, manuals, legends, pies, portuasses, and those that have such trinkets in their possession, Miss Vernon—and there’s summoning of papists to take the oaths—and there are popish recusant convicts under the first of his present Majesty—ay, and there are penalties for hearing mass. See twenty-third of Queen Elizabeth ; and third James First, chapter twenty-fifth.—And there are estates to be registered, and deeds and wills to be enrolled, and double taxes to be made, according to the acts in that case made and provided”——

“ See the new edition of the Statutes at Large, published under the careful revision of Joseph Jobson, Gent., Clerk of the Peace,” said Miss Vernon.

“ Also, and above all,” continued Jobson,—“ for I speak to your warning—you, Diana Vernon, spinstress, not being a femme covert ; and being a convict popish recusant, are bound to repair to your own dwelling, and that by the nearest way, under penalty of being held felon to the king—and diligently to seek for passage at common ferries, and to tarry there but one ebb and flood ; and unless you can have it in such places, to walk every day

into the water up to the knees, assaying to pass over."

"A sort of protestant penance for my Catholic errors, I suppose," said Miss Vernon, laughing. "Well, I thank you for the information, Mr Jobson, and will hie me home as fast as I can, and be a better housekeeper in time coming. Good night, my dear Mr Jobson, thou mirror of clerical courtesy."

"Good night, ma'am, and remember the law is not to be trifled with."

And we rode on our separate ways.

"There he goes, for a troublesome mischief-making tool," said Miss Vernon, as she gave a glance after him; "it is hard that persons of birth and rank and estate should be subjected to the official impertinence of such a paltry pick-thank as that, merely for believing as the whole world believed not much above a hundred years ago—for certainly our Catholic faith has the advantage of antiquity at least."

"I was much tempted to have broken the rascal's head," I replied.

"You would have acted very like a hasty young man," said Miss Vernon; "and yet, had my own hand been an ounce heavier than it is, I think I should have laid its weight upon him.—Well, it does not signify complaining, but there are three things for which I am much to be pitied, if any

one thought it worth while to waste any compassion upon me."

"And what are these three things, Miss Vernon?"

"Will you promise me your deepest sympathy, if I tell you?"

"Certainly;—can you doubt it?" I replied, closing my horse nearer to her's as I spoke, with an expression of interest which I did not attempt to disguise.

"Well, it is very seducing to be pitied after all; so here are my three grievances—In the first place, I am a girl, and not a young fellow, and would be shut up in a mad-house, if I did half the things that I have a mind to; and that, if I had your happy prerogative of acting as you list, would make all the world mad with imitating and applauding me."

"I can't quite afford you the sympathy you expect upon this score," I replied; "the misfortune is so general, that it belongs to one half of the species; and the other half"——

"Are so much better cared for, that they are jealous of their prerogatives," interrupted Miss Vernon; "I forgot you were a party interested. Nay," said she, as I was going to speak, "that soft smile is intended to be the preface of a very pretty compliment respecting the peculiar advantages which Die Vernon's friends and kinsmen enjoy, by her

being born one of their Helots ; but spare me the utterance, my good friend, and let us try whether we shall agree better on the second count of my indictment against fortune, as that quill-driving puppy would call it. I belong to an oppressed sect and antiquated religion, and, instead of getting credit for my devotion, as is due to all good girls beside, my kind friend, Justice Inglewood, may send me to the house of correction, merely for worshipping God in the way of my ancestors, and say, as old Pembroke did to the Abbess of Wilton, when he usurped her convent and establishment, ‘ Go spin, you jade,—go spin.’ ”

“ This is not a cureless evil,” said I gravely. “ Consult some of our learned divines, or consult your own excellent understanding, Miss Vernon ; and surely the particulars in which our religious creed differs from that in which you have been educated”——

“ Hush !” said Diana, placing her fore-finger on her mouth,—“ hush ! no more of that—forsake the faith of my gallant fathers !—I would as soon, were I a man, forsake their banner, when the tide of battle pressed hardest against it, and turn, like a hireling recreant, to join the victorious enemy.”

“ I honour your spirit, Miss Vernon ; and as to the inconveniences to which it exposes you, I can only say, that wounds sustained for the sake of conscience carry their own balsam with the blow.”

“ Ay ; but they are fretful and irritating, for all that. But I see, hard of heart as you are, my chance of beating hemp, or drawing out flax into marvellous coarse thread, affects you as little as my condemnation to coif and pinnars, instead of beaver and cockade ; so I will spare myself the fruitless pains of telling my third cause of vexation.”

“ Nay, my dear Miss Vernon, do not withdraw your confidence, and I will promise you, that the three-fold sympathy due to your very unusual causes of distress shall be all duly and truly paid to account of the third, providing you assure me, that it is one which you neither share with all woman-kind, nor even with every Catholic in England, who, God bless you, are still a sect more numerous than we Protestants, in our zeal for church and state, would desire them to be.”

“ It is, indeed,” said Diana, with a manner greatly altered, and more serious than I had yet seen her assume, “ a misfortune that well merits compassion. I am by nature, as you may easily observe, of a frank and unreserved disposition—a plain honest girl, who would willingly act openly and honestly by the whole world, and yet fate has involved me in such a series of nets, and toils, and entanglements, that I dare hardly speak a word for fear of consequences—not to myself, but to others.”

“ That is indeed a misfortune, Miss Vernon, which I do most sincerely compassionate, but which I should hardly have anticipated.”

“ O, Mr Osbaldistone, if you but knew—if any one knew, what difficulty I sometimes find in hiding an aching heart with a smooth brow, you would indeed pity me—I do wrong, perhaps, in speaking to you even thus far on my own situation. But you are a man of sense and penetration—you cannot but long to ask me a hundred questions on the events of this day—on the share which Rashleigh has in your deliverance from this petty scrape—upon many other points which cannot but excite your attention—and I cannot bring myself to answer with the necessary falsehood and finesse—I should do it awkwardly, and lose your good opinion, if I have any share of it, as well as my own. It is best to say at once, Ask me no questions, I have it not in my power to reply to them.”

Miss Vernon spoke these words with a tone of feeling which could not but make a corresponding impression upon me. I assured her she had neither to fear my urging her with impertinent questions, nor my misconstruing her declining to answer those which might in themselves be reasonable, or at least natural.

“ I was too much obliged,” I said, “ by the interest she had taken in my affairs, to misuse the opportunity her goodness had afforded me of prying into her’s—I only trusted and entreated, that if my services could at any time be useful, she

would command them, without doubt or hesitation."

"Thank you—thank you," she replied; "your voice does not ring the cuckoo chime of compliment, but speaks like that of one who knows to what he pledges himself. If—but it is impossible—but yet, *if* an opportunity should occur, I will ask you if you remember this promise; and I assure you, I shall not be angry if I find you have forgotten it, for it is enough that you are sincere in your intentions just now—much may occur to alter them ere I call upon you, should that moment ever come, to assist Die Vernon, as if you were Die Vernon's brother."

"And if I were Die Vernon's brother," said I, "there could not be less chance that I should refuse my assistance—And now I am afraid I must not ask whether Rashleigh was willingly accessory to my deliverance?"

"Not at me; but you may ask it at himself, and, depend upon it, he will say *yes*; for rather than any good action should walk through the world like an unappropriated adjective in an ill-arranged sentence, he is always willing to stand noun substantive to it himself."

"And I must not ask whether this Campbell be himself the party who eased Mr Morris of his portmanteau, or whether the letter, which our friend

the attorney received, was not a finesse to withdraw him from the scene of action, lest he should have marred the happy event of my deliverance? And I must not ask"——

"You must ask nothing at me," said Miss Vernon; "so it is quite in vain to go on putting cases. You are to think just as well of me, as if I had answered all these queries, and twenty others besides, as glibly as Rashleigh could have done; and observe, whenever I touch my chin just so, it is a sign that I cannot speak upon the topic which happens to occupy your attention. I must settle signals of correspondence with you, because you are to be my confidant and my counsellor, only you are to know nothing whatever of my affairs."

"Nothing can be more reasonable," I replied, laughing; "and the extent of your confidence will, you may rely upon it, only be equalled by the sagacity of my counsels."

This sort of conversation brought us, in the highest good humour with each other, to Osbaldistone Hall, where we found the family far advanced in the revels of the evening.

"Get some dinner for Mr Osbaldistone and me in the library," said Miss Vernon to a servant.—"I must have some compassion upon you," she added, turning to me, "and provide against your starving in this mansion of brutal abundance; otherwise I am not sure that I should show you

my private haunts. This same library is my den—the only corner of the Hall-house where I am safe from the Ouran-Outangs, my cousins. They never venture there, I suppose, for fear the folios should fall down and crack their skulls; for they will never affect their heads in any other way—So follow me.”

And I followed through hall and bower, vaulted passage and winding-stair, until we reached the room where she had ordered our refreshments.

CHAPTER X.

In the wide pile, by others heeded not,
Hers was one sacred solitary spot,
Whose gloomy aisles and bending shelves contain
For moral hunger food, and cures for moral pain.

Anonymous.

THE library at Osbaldistone Hall was a gloomy room, whose antique oaken shelves bent beneath the weight of the ponderous folios so dear to the seventeenth century, from which, under favour be it spoken, we have distilled matter for our quartos and octavos, and which, once more subjected to the alembic, may, should our sons be yet more frivolous than ourselves, be still farther reduced into duodecimos and pamphlets. The collection was chiefly of the classics, as well foreign as ancient history, and, above all, divinity. It was in wretched order. The priests, who, in succession, had acted as chaplains at the Hall, were, for many years, the only persons who entered its precincts, until Rashleigh's

thirst of reading had led him to disturb the venerable spiders, who had muffled the fronts of the presses with their tapestry. His destination for the church rendered his conduct less absurd in his father's eyes, than if any of his other descendants had betrayed so strange a propensity, and Sir Hildebrand acquiesced in the room's receiving some repairs, so as to fit it for a sitting apartment. Still an air of dilapidation, as obvious as it was uncomfortable, pervaded the large apartment, and announced the neglect from which the knowledge which its walls contained had not been able to exempt it. The tattered tapestry, the worm-eaten shelves, the huge and clumsy, yet tottering, tables, desks, and chairs, the rusty grate, seldom gladdened by either sea-coal or faggots, intimated the contempt of the lords of Osbaldistone Hall for learning, and the volumes which record its treasures.

"You think this place somewhat disconsolate, I suppose?" said Diana, as I glanced my eye round the forlorn apartment; "but to me it seems like a little paradise, for I call it my own, and fear no intrusion. Rashleigh was joint proprietor with me, while we were friends."

"And are you no longer so?" was my natural question.

Her forefinger immediately touched her dimpled chin, with an arch look of prohibition.

“ We are still *allies*,” she continued, “ bound, like other confederate powers, by circumstances of mutual interest ; but I am afraid, as will happen in other cases, the treaty of alliance has survived the amicable dispositions in which it had its origin. At any rate, we live less together ; and when he comes through that door there, I vanish through this door here ; and so, having made the discovery that we two were one too many for this apartment, as large as it seems, Rashleigh, whose occasions frequently call him elsewhere, has generously made a cession of his rights in my favour ; so that I now endeavour to prosecute alone the studies in which he used formerly to be my guide.”

“ And what are those studies, if I may presume to ask ?”

“ Indeed you may, without the least fear of seeing my fore-finger raised to my chin. Science and history are my principal favourites ; but I also study poetry and the classics.”

“ And the classics ? Do you read them in the original ?”

“ Unquestionably ; Rashleigh, who is no contemptible scholar, taught me Greek and Latin, as well as most of the languages of modern Europe. I assure you, there has been some pains taken in my education, although I can neither sew a tucker, nor work cross-stitch, nor make a pudding, nor, as

the vicar's fat wife, with as much truth as elegance, good will, and politeness, was pleased to say in my behalf, do any other useful thing in the varsal world."

"And was this selection of studies Rashleigh's choice, or your own, Miss Vernon?" asked I.

"Um!" said she, as if hesitating to answer my question,—“it's not worth while lifting my finger about, after all—why, partly his, and partly mine. As I learned out of doors to ride a horse, and bridle and saddle him in case of necessity, and to clear a five-barred gate, and fire a gun without winking, and all other of those masculine accomplishments that my brute cousins run mad after, I wanted, like my rational cousin, to read Greek and Latin within doors, and make my complete approach to the tree of knowledge, which you men-scholars would engross to yourselves, in revenge, I suppose, for our common mother's share in the great original transgression.”

"And Rashleigh readily indulged your propensity to learning?"

"Why, he wished to have me for his scholar, and he could but teach me that which he knew himself—he was not like to instruct me in the mysteries of washing lace-ruffles, or hemming cambric-handkerchiefs, I suppose.”

"I admit the temptation of getting such a

scholar, and have no doubt that it made a weighty consideration on the tutor's part."

"O, if you begin to investigate Rashleigh's motives, my finger touches my chin once more. I can only be frank where my own are enquired into. But to resume—he has resigned the library in my favour, and never enters without leave had and obtained; and so I have taken the liberty to make it the place of deposit for some of my own goods and chattels, as you may see by looking round you."

"I beg pardon, Miss Vernon, but I really see nothing around these walls which I can distinguish as likely to claim you as mistress."

"That is, I suppose, because you neither see a shepherd or shepherdess wrought in worsted, handsomely framed in black ebony,—or a stuffed parrot,—or a breeding-cage, full of canary-birds,—or a housewife-case, broided with tarnished silver,—or a toilette-table, with a nest of japanned boxes, with as many angles as Christmas minced-pies,—or a broken-backed spinet,—or a lute with three strings,—or rock-work,—or shell-work,—or needle-work, or work of any kind,—or a lap-dog, with a litter of blind puppies—None of these treasures do I possess," she continued, after a pause, in order to recover the breath she had lost in enumerating them—"But there stands the sword of my ancestor Sir Richard Vernon, slain at Shrewsbury, and sore-

ly slandered by a sad fellow called Will Shakspeare, whose Lancastrian partialities, and a certain knack at embodying them, has turned history upside down, or rather inside out ;—and by that redoubted weapon hangs the mail of the still older Vernon, squire to the Black Prince, whose fate is the reverse of his descendant's, since he is more indebted to the bard, who took the trouble to celebrate him, for good will, than for talents,—

‘ Amiddes the route you might discern one
Brave knight, with pipes on shield, ycleped Vernon ;
Like a borne fiend along the plain he thundered,
Prest to be carving throtes, while others plundered.’

Then there is a model of a new martingale which I invented myself—a great improvement on the Duke of Newcastle's ; and there are the hood and bells of my falcon Cheviot, who spitted himself on a heron's bill at Horsely-moss—poor Cheviot, there is not a bird on the perches below, but are kites and riflers compared to him ; and there is my own light fowling-piece, with an improved fire-lock ; with twenty other treasures, each more valuable than another—And there, that speaks for itself.”

She pointed to the carved oak-frame of a full-length portrait by Vandyke, on which were inscribed, in Gothic letters, the words *Vernon semper viret*. I looked at her for explanation—“ Do

you not know," said she, with some surprise, "our motto—the Vernon motto, where,

‘ Like the solemn vice, Iniquity,
We moralize two meanings in one word ?’

And do you not know our cognizance, the pipes ?” pointing to the armorial bearings sculptured on the oaken scutcheon, around which the legend was displayed.

“ Pipes !—they look more like penny-whistles—But, pray, do not be angry with my ignorance,” I continued, observing the colour mount to her cheeks, “ I can mean no affront to your armorial bearings, for I do not even know my own.”

“ You an Osbaldistone, and confess so much !” she exclaimed. “ Why, Percie, Thornie, John, Dickon—Wilfred himself, might be your instructor—Even ignorance itself is a plummet over you.”

“ With shame I confess it, my dear Miss Vernon, the mysteries couched under the grim hieroglyphics of heraldry, are to me as unintelligible as those of the pyramids of Egypt.”

“ What ! is it possible ?—Why, even my uncle reads Gwillym sometimes of a winter night—Not know the figures of heraldry ?—of what could your father be thinking ?”

“ Of the figures of arithmetic,” I answered ; “ the most insignificant unit of which he holds more highly than all the blazonry of chivalry. But,

though I am ignorant to this inexpressible degree, I have knowledge and taste enough to admire that splendid picture, in which I think I can discover a family likeness to you. What ease and dignity in the attitude—what richness of colouring—what breadth and depth of shade !”

“ Is it really a fine painting ?” she asked.

“ I have seen many works of the renowned artist,” I replied, “ but never beheld one more to my liking.”

“ Well, I know as little of pictures as you do of heraldry,” replied Miss Vernon ; “ yet I have the advantage of you, because I have always admired the painting without understanding its value.”

“ While I have neglected pipes and tabors, and all the whimsical combinations of chivalry, still I am informed that they floated in the fields of ancient fame. But you will allow their exterior appearance is not so peculiarly interesting to the uninformed spectator as that of a fine painting.—Who is the person here represented ?”

“ My grandfather—he shared the misfortunes of Charles I. ; and, I am sorry to add, the excesses of his son. Our patrimonial estate was greatly impaired by his prodigality, and was altogether lost by his successor, my unfortunate father. But peace be with them who have got it—it was lost in the cause of loyalty.”

“Your father, I presume, suffered in the political dissensions of the period?”

“He did indeed; he lost his all. And hence is his child a dependent orphan; eating the bread of others; subjected to their caprices, and compelled to study their inclinations: Yet prouder of having had such a father, than if, playing a more prudent, but less upright part, he had left me possessor of all the fair baronies which his family once possessed.”

As she thus spoke, the entrance of the servants with the dinner cut off all conversation, but that of a general nature.

When our hasty meal was concluded, and the wine placed on the table, the domestic informed us, “that Mr Rashleigh had desired to be told when our dinner was removed.”

“Tell him,” said Miss Vernon, “we shall be happy to see him if he will step this way—place another wine-glass and chair, and leave the room.—You must retire with him when he goes away,” she continued, addressing herself to me; “even *my* liberality cannot spare a gentleman above eight hours out of the twenty-four; and I think we have been together for at least that length of time.”

“The old scythe-man has moved so rapidly,” I answered, “that I could not count his strides.”

“Hush!” said Miss Vernon, “here comes Rashleigh;” and she drew off her chair, to which I had

approached mine rather closely, so as to place a greater distance between us.

A modest tap at the door,—a gentle manner of opening when invited to enter,—a studied softness and humility of step and deportment, announced that the education of Rashleigh Osbaldistone at the College of St Omers accorded well with the ideas I entertained of the manners of an accomplished Jesuit. I need not add, that, as a sound Protestant, these ideas were not the most favourable. “Why should you use the ceremony of knocking,” said Miss Vernon, “when you knew that I was not alone?”

This was spoken with a burst of impatience, as if she had felt that Rashleigh’s air of caution and reserve covered some insinuation of impertinent suspicion. “You have taught me the form of knocking at this door so perfectly, my fair cousin,” answered Rashleigh, without change of voice or manner, “that habit has become a second nature.”

“I prize sincerity more than courtesy, sir, and you know I do,” was Miss Vernon’s reply.

“Courtesy is a gallant gay, a courtier by name and by profession,” replied Rashleigh, “and therefore most fit for a lady’s bower.”

“But Sincerity is the true Knight,” retorted Miss Vernon, “and therefore much more welcome, cousin. But, to end a debate not over amusing to your stranger kinsman, sit down, Rashleigh, and

give Mr Francis Osbaldistone your countenance to his glass of wine. I have done the honours of the dinner, for the credit of Osbaldistone Hall."

Rashleigh sate down, and filled his glass, glancing his eye from Diana to me, with an embarrassment which his utmost efforts could not entirely disguise. I thought he appeared to be uncertain concerning the extent of confidence she might have reposed in me, and hastened to lead the conversation into a channel which should sweep away his suspicion that Diana might have betrayed any secrets which rested between them. "Miss Vernon," I said, "Mr Rashleigh, has recommended me to return my thanks to you for my speedy disengagement from the ridiculous accusation of Morris; and, unjustly fearing my gratitude might not be warm enough to remind me of this duty, she has put my curiosity on its side, by referring me to you for an account, or rather explanation, of the events of the day."

"Indeed?" answered Rashleigh; "I should have thought," (looking keenly at Miss Vernon,) "that the lady herself might have stood interpreter;" and his eye, reverting from her face, sought mine, as if to search, from the expression of my features, whether Diana's communication had been as narrowly limited as my words had intimated. Miss Vernon retorted his inquisitorial glance with one

of decided scorn ; while I, uncertain whether to deprecate or resent his obvious suspicion, replied, " If it is your pleasure, Mr Rashleigh, as it has been Miss Vernon's, to leave me in ignorance, I must necessarily submit ; but, pray, do not withhold your information from me, on the ground of imagining that I have already obtained any on the subject. For I tell you as a man of honour, I am as ignorant as that picture of anything relating to the events I have witnessed to-day, excepting that I understand from Miss Vernon, that you have been kindly active in my favour."

" Miss Vernon has over-rated my humble efforts," said Rashleigh, " though I claim full credit for my zeal. The truth is, that as I galloped back to get some one of our family to join me in becoming your bail, which was the most obvious, or, indeed, I may say, the only way of serving you which occurred to my stupidity, I met the man Cawmil—Colville—Campbell, or whatsoever they call him. I had understood from Morris that he was present when the robbery took place, and had the good fortune to prevail on him, (with some difficulty, I confess,) to tender his evidence in your exculpation, which I presume was the means of your being released from an unpleasant situation."

" Indeed ?—I am much your debtor for procuring such a seasonable evidence in my behalf. But

I cannot see why, (having been, as he said, a fellow-sufferer with Morris,) it should have required much trouble to persuade him to step forth and bear evidence, whether to convict the actual robber, or free an innocent person."

" You do not know the genius of that man's country, sir," answered Rashleigh ; " discretion, prudence, and foresight, are their leading qualities ; these are only modified by a narrow-spirited, but yet ardent patriotism, which forms as it were the outmost of the concentric bulwarks with which a Scotchman fortifies himself against all the attacks of a generous philanthropical principle. Surmount this mound, you find an inner and still dearer barrier—the love of his province, his village, or, most probably, his clan ; storm this second obstacle, you have a third—his attachment to his own family—his father, mother, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, and cousins, to the ninth generation. It is within these limits that a Scotchman's social affection expands itself, never reaching those which are outermost, till all means of discharging itself in the interior circles have been exhausted. It is within these circles that his heart throbs, each pulsation being fainter and fainter, till, beyond the widest boundary, it is almost unfelt. And what is worst of all, could you surmount all these concentric outworks, you have an inner citadel, deeper,

higher, and more efficient than them all—a Scotchman's love for himself."

"All this is extremely eloquent and metaphorical, Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon, who listened with unrepresed impatience; "there are only two objections to it: first, it is *not* true; secondly, if true, it is nothing to the purpose."

"It *is* true, my fairest Diana," returned Rashleigh; "and moreover, it is most instantly to the purpose. It is true, because you cannot deny that I know the country and people intimately, and the character is drawn from deep and accurate consideration; and it is to the purpose, because it answers Mr Francis Osbaldistone's question, and shows why this same wary Scotchman, considering our kinsman to be neither his countryman, nor a Campbell, nor his cousin in any of the inextricable combinations by which they extend their pedigree; and, above all, seeing no prospect of personal advantage, but, on the contrary, much hazard of loss of time and delay of business"——

"With other inconveniencies, perhaps, of a nature yet more formidable," interrupted Miss Vernon.

"Of which, doubtless, there might be many," said Rashleigh, continuing in the same tone—"In short, my theory shows why this man, hoping for no advantage, and afraid of some inconvenience, might require a degree of persuasion ere he could

be prevailed on to give his testimony in favour of Mr Osbaldistone."

"It seems surprising to me," I observed, "that during the glance I cast over the declaration, or whatever it is termed, of Mr Morris, he should never have mentioned that Campbell was in his company when he met the marauders."

"I understood from Campbell, that he had taken his solemn promise not to mention that circumstance," replied Rashleigh; "his reason for exacting such an engagement you may guess from what I have hinted—he wished to get back to his own country, undelayed and unembarrassed by any of the judicial enquiries which he would have been under the necessity of attending, had the fact of his being present at the robbery taken air while he was on this side of the Border. But let him once be as distant as the Forth, Morris will, I warrant you, come forth with all he knows about him, and, it may be, a good deal more. Besides, Campbell is a very extensive dealer in cattle, and has often occasion to send great droves over into Northumberland; and, when driving such a trade, he would be a great fool to embroil himself with our Northumbrian thieves, than whom no men who live are more vindictive."

"I dare be sworn of that," said Miss Vernon, with a tone which implied something more than a simple acquiescence in the proposition.

“ Still,” said I, resuming the subject, “ allowing the force of the reasons which Campbell might have for desiring that Morris should be silent with regard to his promise when the robbery was committed, I cannot yet see how he could attain so much influence over the man, as to make him suppress his evidence in that particular, at the manifest risk of subjecting his story to discredit.”

Rashleigh agreed with me, that it was very extraordinary, and seemed to regret that he had not questioned the Scotchman more closely on that subject, which he allowed looked extremely mysterious, “ But,” he asked, immediately after this acquiescence, “ are you very sure the circumstance of Morris’s being accompanied by Campbell, is really not alluded to in his examination ?”

“ I read the paper over hastily,” said I ; “ but it is my strong impression, that no such circumstance is mentioned ; at least it must have been touched on very slightly, since it failed to catch my attention.”

“ True, true,” answered Rashleigh, forming his own inference while he adopted my words ; “ I incline to think with you, that the circumstance must in reality have been mentioned, but so slightly, that it failed to attract your attention. And then, as to Campbell’s interest with Morris, I incline to suppose that it must have been gained by playing upon his fears. This chicken-hearted

fellow, Morris, is bound, I understand, for Scotland, destined for some little employment under government ; and, possessing the courage of the wrathful dove, or most magnanimous mouse, he may have been afraid to encounter the ill-will of such a kill-cow as Campbell, whose very appearance would be enough to fright him out of his little wits. You observed that Mr Campbell has at times a keen and animated manner—something of a martial cast in his tone and bearing.”

“ I own,” I replied, “ that his expression struck me as being occasionally fierce and sinister, and little adapted to his peaceable professions. Has he served in the army ?”

“ Yes—no—not, strictly speaking, *served* ; but he has been, I believe, like most of his countrymen, trained to arms. Indeed, among the hills, they carry them from boyhood to the grave. So, if you know anything of your fellow-traveller, you will easily judge, that, going to such a country, he will take care to avoid a quarrel if he can help it with any of the natives.—But, come, I see you decline your wine—and I too am a degenerate Osbaldistone, so far as respects the circulation of the bottle. If you will go to my room, I will hold you a hand at piquet.”

We rose to take leave of Miss Vernon, who had from time to time suppressed, apparently with difficulty, a strong temptation to break in upon Rash-

leigh's details. As we were about to leave the room, the smothered fire broke forth.

"Mr Osbaldistone," she said, "your own observation will enable you to verify the justice, or injustice, of Rashleigh's suggestions concerning such individuals as Mr Campbell and Mr Morris. But, in slandering Scotland, he has borne false witness against a whole country; and I request you will allow no weight to his evidence."

"Perhaps I may find it somewhat difficult to obey your injunction, Miss Vernon; for I must own I was bred up with no very favourable idea of our northern neighbours."

"Distrust that part of your education, sir," she replied, "and let the daughter of a Scotchwoman pray you to respect the land which gave her parent birth, until your own observation has proved them to be unworthy of your good opinion. Preserve your hatred and contempt for dissimulation, baseness, and falsehood, wheresoever they are to be met with. You will find enough of all without leaving England.—Adieu, gentlemen,—I wish you good evening."

And she signed to the door, with the manner of a princess dismissing her train.

We retired to Rashleigh's apartment, where a servant brought us coffee and cards. I had formed my resolution to press Rashleigh no farther on the events of the day. A mystery, and, as I thought,

not of a favourable complexion, appeared to hang over his conduct ; but to ascertain if my suspicions were just, it was necessary to throw him off his guard. We cut for the deal, and were soon earnestly engaged in our play. I thought I perceived in this trifling for amusement (for the stake which Rashleigh proposed was a mere trifle) something of a fierce and ambitious temper. He seemed perfectly to understand the beautiful game at which he played, but preferred, as it were on principle, the risking bold and precarious strokes to the ordinary rules of play, and neglecting the minor and better balanced chances of the game ; he hazarded every thing for the chance of piqueing, repiqueing, or capotting his adversary. So soon as the intervention of a game or two at piquet, like the music between the acts of a drama, had completely interrupted our previous course of conversation, Rashleigh appeared to tire of the game, and the cards were superseded by discourse, in which he assumed the lead.

More learned than soundly wise—better acquainted with men's minds than with the moral principles that ought to regulate them, he had still powers of conversation which I have rarely seen equalled, never excelled. Of this his manner implied some consciousness ; at least, it appeared to me that he had studied hard to improve his natural advantages of a melodious voice, fluent and happy expression, apt language and fervid imagi-

nation. He was never loud, never overbearing, never so much occupied with his own thoughts, as to outrun either the patience or the comprehension of those he conversed with. His ideas succeeded each other with the gentle but unintermitting flow of a plentiful and bounteous spring ; while I have heard those of others, who aimed at distinction in conversation, rush along like the turbid gush from the sluice of a mill-pond, as hurried, and as early exhausted. It was late at night ere I could part from a companion so fascinating ; and, when I gained my own apartment, it cost me no small effort to recal to my mind the character of Raleigh, such as I had pictured him previous to this tete-a-tete.

So effectual, my dear Tresham, does the sense of being pleased and amused blunt our faculties of perception and discrimination of character, that I can only compare it to the taste of certain fruits, at once luscious and poignant, which renders our palate totally unfit for relishing or distinguishing the viands which are subsequently subjected to its criticism.

CHAPTER VII.

What gars ye gaunt, my merrymen a' ?

What gars ye look sae dreary ?

What gars ye hing your head sae sair

In the castle of Balwearie ?

Old Scotch Ballad.

THE next morning chanced to be Sunday, a day peculiarly hard to be got rid of at Osbaldistone Hall ; for after the formal religious service of the morning had been performed, at which all the family regularly attended, it was hard to say upon which individual, Rashleigh and Miss Vernon excepted, the fiend of ennui descended with the most abundant outpouring of his spirit. To speak of my yesterday's embarrassment amused Sir Hildebrand for several minutes, and he congratulated me on my deliverance from Morpeth or Hexham jail, as he would have done if I had fallen in attempting to clear a five-barred gate, and got up without hurting myself.

“Hast had a lucky turn, lad ; but do na be over venturous again. What, man ! the king’s road is free to all men, be they Whigs, be they Tories.”

“On my word, sir, I am innocent of interrupting it ; and it is the most provoking thing on earth, that every person will take it for granted that I am accessory to a crime which I despise and detest, and which would, moreover, deservedly forfeit my life to the laws of my country.”

“Well, well, lad ; even so be it ; I ask no questions—no man bound to tell on himsell—that’s fair play, or the devil’s in’t.”

Rashleigh here came to my assistance ; but I could not help thinking that his arguments were calculated rather as hints to his father to put on a show of acquiescence in my declaration of innocence, than fully to establish it.

“In your own house, my dear sir—and your own nephew—you will not surely persist in hurting his feelings, by seeming to discredit what he is so strongly interested in affirming. No doubt, you are fully deserving of all his confidence, and I am sure were there any thing you could do to assist him in this strange affair, he would have recourse to your goodness. But my cousin Frank has been dismissed as an innocent man, and no one is entitled to suppose him otherwise. For my part, I have not the least doubt of his innocence ; and

our family-honour, I conceive, requires that we should maintain it with tongue and sword against the whole country."

"Rashleigh," said his father, looking fixedly at him, "thou art a sly loon—thou hast ever been too cunning for me, and too cunning for most folks. Have a care thou provena too cunning for thyself—two faces under one hood is no true heraldry.—And since we talk of heraldry, I'll go and read Gwilym."

This resolution he intimated with a yawn, restless as that of the Goddess in the Dunciad, which was responsively echoed by his giant-sons, as they dispersed in quest of the pastimes to which their minds severally inclined them—Percie to discuss a pot of March beer with the steward in the but-tery,—Thorncliff to cut a pair of cudgels, and fix them in their wicker-hilts,—John to dress May-flies,—Dickon to play at pitch and toss by himself—his right hand against his left,—and Wilfred to bite his thumbs, and hum himself into a slumber which should last till dinner-time, if possible. Miss Vernon had retired to the library.

Rashleigh and I were left alone in the old hall, from which the servants, with their usual bustle and awkwardness, had at length contrived to hurry the remains of our substantial breakfast. I took the opportunity to upbraid him with the manner in which he had spoken of my affair to his father,

which I frankly stated was highly offensive to me, as it seemed rather to exhort Sir Hildebrand to conceal his suspicions, than to root them out.

“ Why, what can I do, my dear friend ? ” replied Rashleigh ; “ my father’s disposition is so tenacious of suspicions of all kinds, when once they take root, which, to do him justice, does not easily happen, that I have always found it the best way to silence him upon such subjects, instead of arguing with him. Thus I get the better of the weeds which I cannot eradicate, by cutting them over as often as they appear, until at length they die away of themselves. There is neither wisdom nor profit in disputing with such a mind as Sir Hildebrand’s, which hardens itself against conviction, and believes in its own inspirations as firmly as we good Catholics do in those of the Holy Father of Rome.”

“ It is very hard though, that I should live in the house of a man, and he a near relation too, who will persist in believing me guilty of a highway robbery.”

“ My father’s foolish opinion, if one may give that epithet to any opinion of a father’s, does not affect your real innocence ; and as to the disgrace of the fact, depend on it, that, considered in all its bearings, political as well as moral, Sir Hildebrand regards it as a meritorious action—a weakening of the enemy—a spoiling of the Amalekites—and

you will stand the higher in his regard for your supposed accession to it."

"I desire no man's regard, Mr Rashleigh, on such terms as must sink me in my own; and I think these injurious suspicions will afford a very good reason for quitting Osbaldistone Hall, which I shall do whenever I can communicate on the subject with my father."

The dark countenance of Rashleigh, though little accustomed to betray its master's feelings, exhibited a suppressed smile, which he instantly chastened by a sigh.

"You are a happy man, Frank—you go and come, as the wind bloweth where it listeth. With your address, taste and talents, you will soon find circles where they will be more valued, than amid the dull inmates of this mansion; while I——" he paused.

"And what is there in your lot that can make you or any one envy mine,—an outcast, as I may almost term myself, from my father's house and favour?"

"Ay, but," answered Rashleigh, "consider the gratified sense of independence which you must have attained by a very temporary sacrifice, for such I am sure yours will prove to be—consider the power of acting as a free agent, of cultivating your own talents in the way to which your taste determines you, and in which you are

well qualified to distinguish yourself—Fame and freedom are cheaply purchased by a few weeks residence in the North, even though your place of exile be Osbaldistone Hall.—A second Ovid in Thrace, you have not his reasons for writing *Tristia*.”

“ I do not know,” said I, blushing as became a young scribbler, “ how you should be so well acquainted with my truant studies.”

“ There was an emissary of your father’s here some time since, a young coxcomb, one Twineall, who informed me concerning your secret sacrifices to the muses, and added, that some of your verses had been greatly admired by the best judges.”

Tresham, I believe you are guiltless of having ever essayed to build the lofty rhyme ; but you must have known in your day many an apprentice and fellow-craft, if not some of the master-masons in the temple of Apollo. Vanity is ~~their~~ universal foible, from him who decorated the shades of Twickenham, to the veriest scribbler whom he has lashed in his *Dunciad*. I had my own share of this common failing, and without considering how little likely this young fellow Twineall was, by taste and habits, to be acquainted either with one or two little pieces of poetry, which I had at times insinuated into Button’s coffee-house, or to report the opinion of the critics who frequented that resort of wit and literature, I almost instantly gor-

ged the bait, which Rashleigh perceiving, improved his opportunity by a diffident, yet apparently very anxious request, to be permitted to see some of my manuscript productions.

“ You shall give me an evening in my own apartment,” he continued ; “ for I must soon lose the charms of literary society for the drudgery of commerce, and the coarse every-day avocations of the world. I repeat it, that my compliance with my father’s wishes for the advantage of my family, is indeed a sacrifice, especially considering the calm and peaceful profession to which my education destined me.”

I was vain, but not a fool, and this hypocrisy was too strong for me to swallow—“ You would not persuade me,” I replied, “ that you really regret to exchange the situation of an obscure Catholic priest, with all its privations, for wealth and society, and the pleasures of the world ?”

Rashleigh saw that he had coloured his affectation of moderation too highly, and, after a second’s pause, during which, I suppose, he calculated the degree of candour which it was necessary to use with me, (that being a quality of which he was never needlessly profuse) he answered with a smile, —“ At my age, to be condemned, as you say, to wealth and the world, does not, indeed, sound so alarming as perhaps it ought to do. But, with pardon be it spoken, you have mistaken my des-

tion—a Catholic priest, if you will, but not an obscure one—No, sir, Rashleigh Osbaldistone will be more obscure, should he rise to be the richest citizen in London, than he might have been as a member of a church, whose ministers, as some one says, ‘set their sandall’d feet on princes.’—My family interest at a certain exiled court is high, and the weight which that court ought to possess, and does possess, at Rome, is yet higher—my talents not altogether inferior to the education I have received. In sober judgment, I might have looked forward to high eminence in the church—in the dream of fancy, to the very highest—Why might not,” (he added, laughing, for it was part of his manner to keep much of his discourse apparently betwixt jest and earnest,)—“why might not Cardinal Osbaldistone have swayed the fortunes of empires, well-born and well-connected, as well as the low-born Mazarin, or Alberoni, the son of an Italian gardener?”

“Nay, I can give you no reason to the contrary; but in your place I should not much regret losing the chance of such precarious and invidious elevation.”

“Neither would I,” he replied, “were I sure that my present establishment was more certain; but that must depend upon circumstances, which I can only learn by experience—the disposition of your father, for example.”

“ Confess the truth without finesse, Rashleigh ; you would willingly know something of him from me ?”

“ Since, like Die Vernon, you make a point of following the banner of the good knight Sincerity, I reply—certainly.”

“ Well, then, you will find in my father a man who has followed the paths of thriving more for the exercise they afforded to his talents, than for the love of the gold with which they are strewed. His active mind would have been happy in any situation which gave it scope for exertion, though that exertion had been its sole reward. But his wealth has accumulated, because, moderate and frugal in his habits, no new sources of expense have occurred to dispose of his increasing income. He is a man who hates dissimulation in others ; never practises it himself ; and is peculiarly alert in discovering motives through the colouring of language. Himself silent by habit, he is readily disgusted by great talkers ; the rather, that the circumstances by which he is most interested afford no great scope for conversation. He is severely strict in the duties of religion ; but you have no reason to fear his interference with yours, for he regards toleration as a sacred principle of political economy. But if you have any jacobitical partialities, as is naturally to be supposed, you will do well to suppress them in his presence, as well as

the least tendency to the highflying or Tory principles ; for he holds both in utter detestation. For the rest, his word is his own bond, and must be the law of all who act under him. He will fail in his duty to no one, and will permit no one to fail towards him ; to cultivate his favour, you must execute his commands, instead of echoing his sentiments. His greatest feelings arise out of prejudices connected with his own profession, or rather his exclusive devotion to it, which makes him see little worthy of praise or attention, unless it be in some measure connected with commerce."

" O rare-painted portrait !" exclaimed Rashleigh, when I was silent—" Vandyke was a dauber to you, Frank. I see thy sire before me in all his strength and weakness ; loving and honouring the King as a sort of lord mayor of the empire, or chief of the board of trade ;—venerating the Commons, for the acts regulating the export trade ;—and respecting the Peers, because the Lord Chancellor sits on a wool-sack."

" Mine was a likeness, Rashleigh ; yours is a caricature. But in return for the *carte de pays* which I have unfolded to you, give me some lights on the geography of the unknown lands——"

" On which you are wrecked," said Rashleigh. " It is not worth while ; it is no Isle of Calypso, umbrageous with shade and intricate with sylvan labyrinth—but a bare ragged Northumbrian moor,

with as little to interest curiosity as to delight the eye—you may descry it in all its nakedness in half an hour's survey, as well as if I were to lay it down before you by line and compass."

"O, but something there is, worthy a more attentive survey—What say you to Miss Vernon? Does not she form an interesting object in the landscape, were all round as rude as Iceland's coast?"

I could plainly perceive that Rashleigh disliked the topic now presented to him; but my frank communication had given me the advantageous title to make enquiries in my turn. Rashleigh felt this, and found himself obliged to follow my lead, however difficult he might find it to play his cards successfully. "I have known less of Miss Vernon," he said, "for some time, than I was wont to do formerly. In early age I was her tutor; but as she advanced towards womanhood, my various avocations,—the gravity of the profession to which I was destined,—the peculiar nature of her engagements,—our mutual situation, in short, rendered a close and constant intimacy dangerous and improper. I believe Miss Vernon might consider my reserve as unkindness, but it was my duty; I felt as much as she seemed to do, when compelled to give way to prudence. But where was the safety in cultivating an intimacy with a beautiful and susceptible girl, whose heart, you are

aware, must be given either to the cloister or to a betrothed husband ?”

“ The cloister or a betrothed husband ?” I echoed — “ Is that the alternative destined for Miss Vernon ?”

“ It is indeed,” said Rashleigh, with a sigh. “ I need not, I suppose, caution you against the danger of cultivating too closely the friendship of Miss Vernon ; you are a man of the world, and know how far you can indulge yourself in her society, with safety to yourself and justice to her. But I warn you, that, considering her ardent temper, you must let your experience keep guard over her as well as yourself, for the specimen of yesterday may serve to show her extreme thoughtlessness and neglect of decorum.”

There was something, I was sensible, of truth, as well as good sense, in all this ; it seemed to be given as a friendly warning, and I had no right to take it amiss ; yet I felt I could with pleasure have run Rashleigh Osbaldistone through the body all the time he was speaking.

The deuce take his insolence ! was my internal meditation. Would he wish me to infer, that Miss Vernon had fallen in love with that hatchet-face of his, and become degraded so low as to require his shyness to cure her of an imprudent passion ? I will have his meaning from him, was my resolution, if I should drag it out with cart-ropes.

For this purpose, I placed my temper under as accurate a guard as I could, and observed, "That, for a lady of her good sense and acquired accomplishments, it was to be regretted that Miss Vernon's manners were rather blunt and rustic."

"Frank and unreserved, at least, to the extreme," replied Rashleigh; "yet, trust me, she has an excellent heart. To tell you the truth, should she continue her extreme aversion to the cloister, and to her destined husband, and should my own labours in the mine of Plutus promise to secure me a decent independence, I shall think of renewing our acquaintance, and sharing it with Miss Vernon."

With all his fine voice, and well-turned periods, thought I, this same Rashleigh Osbaldistone is the ugliest and most conceited coxcomb I ever met with.

"But," continued Rashleigh, as if thinking aloud, "I should not like to supplant Thorncliff."

"Supplant Thorncliff!—Is your brother Thorncliff," I enquired, with great surprise, "the destined husband of Diana Vernon?"

"Why, ay; her father's commands, and a certain family-contract, destine her to marry one of Sir Hildebrand's sons. A dispensation has been obtained from Rome to Diana Vernon to marry *Blank* Osbaldistone, Esq., son of Sir Hildebrand

Osbaldistone, of Osbaldistone Hall, Bart., and so forth ; and it only remains to pitch upon the happy man, whose name shall fill the gap in the manuscript. Now, as Percie is seldom sober, my father pitched on Thorncliff, as the second prop of the family, and therefore most proper to carry on the line of the Osbaldistones."

"The young lady," said I, forcing myself to assume an air of pleasantry, which, I believe, became me extremely ill, "would perhaps have been inclined to look a little lower on the family-tree, for the branch to which she was desirous of clinging."

"I cannot say," he replied. "There is room for little choice in our family ; Dick is a gambler, John a boor, and Wilfred an ass. I believe my father really made the best selection for poor Die, after all."

"The present company," said I, "being always excepted."

"O, my destination to the church placed me out of the question ; otherwise I will not affect to say, that, qualified by my education both to instruct and guide Miss Vernon, I might not have been a more creditable choice than any of my elders."

"And so thought the young lady, doubtless ?"

"You are not to suppose so," answered Raleigh, with an affectation of denial, which was con-

trived to convey the strongest affirmation the case admitted of—"friendship—only friendship—formed the tie betwixt us, and the tender affection of an opening mind to its only instructor—Love came not near us—I told you I was wise in time."

I felt little inclination to pursue this conversation any farther, and, shaking myself clear of Rashleigh, withdrew to my own apartment, which I recollect I traversed with much vehemence of agitation, repeating aloud the expressions which had most offended me. "Susceptible—ardent—tender affection—Love!—Diana Vernon, the most beautiful creature I ever beheld, in love with him, the bandy-legged, bull-necked, limping scoundrel!—Richard the Third in all but his hump-back!—And yet the opportunities he must have had during his cursed course of lectures; and the fellow's flowing and easy strain of sentiment; and her extreme seclusion from every one who spoke and acted with common sense; ay, and her obvious pique at him, mixed with admiration of his talents, which looked as like the result of neglected attachment as anything else—Well, and what is it to me that I should storm and rage at it? Is Diana Vernon the first pretty girl that has loved or married an ugly fellow? And if she were free of every Osbaldistone of them, what concern is it of mine?—A catholic—a jacobite—a termagant into the boot—for me to look that way were utter madness."

By throwing such reflections on the flame of my displeasure, I subdued it into a sort of smouldering heart-burning, and appeared at the dinner-table in as sulky a humour as could well be imagined.

CHAPTER XII.

Drunk?—and speak parrot?—and squabble?—swagger?—
Swear?—and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?

OTHELLO.

I HAVE already told you, my dear Tresham, which probably was no news to you, that my principal fault was an unconquerable pitch of pride, which exposed me to frequent mortification. I had not even whispered to myself, that I loved Diana Vernon; yet no sooner did I hear Rashleigh talk of her as a prize which he might stoop to carry off, or neglect at his pleasure, than every step which the poor girl had taken, in the innocence and openness of her heart, to form a sort of friendship with me, seemed in my eyes the most insulting coquetry. “Soh! she would secure me as a *pis aller*, I suppose, in case Mr Rashleigh Osbaldistone should not take compassion upon her! but I will satisfy her that I am not a person to be trepanned in that manner—I will make her sensible that I see through her arts, and that I scorn them.”

I did not reflect for a moment, that all this indignation, which I had no right whatsoever to entertain, proved that I was anything but indifferent to Miss Vernon's charms ; and I sate down to table in high ill-humour with her and all the daughters of Eve.

Miss Vernon heard me, with surprise, return ungracious answers to one or two playful strokes of satire which she threw out with her usual freedom of speech ; but, having no suspicion that offence was meant, she only replied to my rude repartees with jests somewhat similar, but polished by her good temper, though pointed by her wit. At length she perceived I was really out of humour, and answered one of my rude speeches thus :

“ They say, Mr Frank, that one may gather sense from fools—I heard cousin Wilfred refuse to play any longer at cudgels the other day with cousin Thornie, because cousin Thornie got angry, and struck harder than the rules of amicable combat, it seems, permitted. ‘ Were I to break your head in good earnest,’ quoth honest Wilfred, ‘ I care not how angry you are, for I should do it so much the more easily ;—but it’s hard I should get raps over the costard, and only pay you back in make-believes’—Do you understand the moral of this, Frank ?”

“ I have never felt myself under the necessity, madam, of studying how to extract the slender por-

tion of sense with which this family season their conversation."

"Necessity! and madam!—you surprise me, Mr Osbaldistone."

"I am unfortunate in doing so."

"Am I to suppose that this capricious tone is serious; or is it only assumed, to make your good humour more valuable?"

"You have a right to the attention of so many gentlemen in this family, Miss Vernon, that it cannot be worth your while to enquire into the cause of my stupidity and bad spirits."

"What! am I to understand, then, that you have deserted my faction, and gone over to the enemy?"—

Then, looking across the table, and observing that Rashleigh, who was seated opposite, was watching us with a singular expression of interest on his harsh features, she continued,

"Horrible thought!—Ay, now I see 'tis true,
For the grim-visaged Rashleigh smiles on me,
And points at thee for his!"——

Well, thank Heaven, and the unprotected state which has taught me endurance, I do not take offence easily; and that I may not be forced to quarrel, whether I like it or no, I have the honour, earlier than usual, to wish you a happy digestion of your dinner and your bad humour."

And she left the table accordingly.

Upon Miss Vernon's departure, I found myself very little satisfied with my own conduct. I had hurled back offered kindness, of which circumstances had but lately pointed out the honest sincerity, and I had but just stopped short of insulting the beautiful, and, as she had said with some emphasis, the unprotected being by whom it was proffered. My conduct seemed brutal in my own eyes. To combat or drown these painful reflections, I applied myself more frequently than usual to the wine which circulated on the table.

The agitated state of my feelings combined with my habits of temperance to give rapid effect to the beverage. Habitual topers, I believe, acquire the power of soaking themselves with a quantity of liquor which does little more than muddy those intellects, that, in their sober state, are none of the clearest; but men who are strangers to the vice of drunkenness as a habit, are more powerfully acted upon by intoxicating liquors. My spirits, once aroused, became extravagant; I talked a great deal, argued upon what I knew nothing of, told stories of which I forgot the point, then laughed immoderately at my own forgetfulness; I accepted several bets without having the least judgment; I challenged the giant John to wrestle with me, although he had kept the ring at Hexham for a year, and I never tried so much as a single fall.

My uncle had the goodness to interpose and prevent this consummation of drunken folly, which, I suppose, would have otherwise ended in my neck being broken.

It has even been reported by maligners, that I sung a song while under this vinous influence ; but, as I remember nothing of it, and never attempted to turn a tune in all my life before or since, I would willingly hope there is no actual foundation for the calumny. I was absurd enough without this exaggeration. Without positively losing my senses, I speedily lost all command of my temper, and my impetuous passions whirled me onward at their pleasure. I had sate down sulky and discontented, and disposed to be silent—the wine rendered me loquacious, disputacious, and quarrelsome. I contradicted whatever was asserted, and attacked, without any respect to my uncle's table, both his politics and his religion. The affected moderation of Rashleigh, which he well knew how to qualify with irritating ingredients, was even more provoking to me than the noisy and bullying language of his obstreperous brothers. My uncle, to do him justice, endeavoured to bring us to order ; but his authority was lost amidst the tumult of wine and passion. At length, trantic at some real, or supposed injurious insinuation, I actually struck Rashleigh with my fist. No Stoic philosopher, supe-

rior to his own passion and that of others, could have received an insult with a higher degree of scorn. What he himself did not think it apparently worth while to resent, Thorncliff resented for him. Swords were drawn, and we exchanged one or two passes, when the other brothers separated us by main force ; and I shall never forget the diabolical sneer which writhed Rashleigh's wayward features, as I was forced from the apartment by the main strength of two of these youthful Titans. They secured me in my apartment by locking the door, and I heard them, to my inexpressible rage, laugh heartily as they descended the stairs. I essayed in my fury to break out ; but the window-grates, and the strength of a door clenched with iron, resisted my efforts. At length I threw myself on my bed, and fell asleep amidst vows of dire revenge to be taken in the ensuing day. .

But with the morning cool repentance came. I felt, in the keenest manner, the violence and absurdity of my conduct, and was obliged to confess that wine and passion had lowered my intellects even below those of Wilfred Osbaldistone, whom I held in so much contempt. My uncomfortable reflections were by no means soothed by meditating the necessity of an apology for my improper behaviour, and recollecting that Miss Vernon must be a witness of my submission. The impropriety and

unkindness of my conduct to her personally, added not a little to these galling considerations, and for this I could not even plead the miserable excuse of intoxication.

Under all these aggravating feelings of shame and degradation, I descended to the breakfast-hall, like a criminal to receive sentence. It chanced that a hard frost had rendered it impossible to take out the hounds, so that I had the additional mortification to meet the family, excepting only Rashleigh and Miss Vernon, in full divan, surrounding the cold venison-pasty and chine of beef. They were in high glee as I entered, and I could easily imagine that the jests were furnished at my expence. In fact, what I was disposed to consider with serious pain, was regarded as an excellent good joke by my uncle, and the greater part of my cousins. Sir Hildebrand, while he rallied me on the exploits of the preceding evening, swore he thought a young fellow had better be thrice drunk in one day, than sneak sober to bed like a presbyterian, and leave a batch of honest fellows, and a double quart of claret. And to back this consolatory speech, he poured out a large bumper of brandy, exhorting me to swallow "a hair of the dog that had bit me."

"Never mind these lads laughing, nevoy," he continued; "they would have been all as great milk-sops as yourself, had I not nursed them, as one may say, on the toast and tankard."

Ill-nature was not the fault of my cousins in general ; they saw I was vexed and hurt at the recollections of the preceding evening, and endeavoured, with clumsy kindness, to remove the painful impression they had made on me. Thorncliff alone looked sullen and unreconciled. This young man had never liked me from the beginning ; and in the marks of attention occasionally shewn me by his brothers, awkward as they were, he alone had never joined. If it was true, of which, however, I began to have my doubts, that he was considered by the family, or regarded himself, as the destined husband of Miss Vernon, a sentiment of jealousy might have sprung up in his mind from the marked predilection which it was that young lady's pleasure to shew for one, whom Thorncliff might, perhaps, think likely to become a dangerous rival.

Rashleigh at last entered, his visage as dark as mourning weed, brooding, I could not but doubt, over the unjustifiable and disgraceful insult I had offered to him. I had already settled in my own mind how I was to behave on the occasion, and had schooled myself to believe, that true honour consisted not in defending, but in apologizing for, an injury so much disproportioned to any provocation I might have to allege.

I therefore hastened to meet Rashleigh, and to express myself in the highest degree sorry for the

violence with which I had acted on the preceding evening.

“No circumstances,” I said, “could have wrung from me a single word of apology, save my own consciousness of the impropriety of my behaviour. I hoped my cousin would accept of my regrets so sincerely offered, and consider how much of my misconduct was owing to the excessive hospitality of Osbaldistone Hall.”

“He shall be friends with thee, lad,” cried the honest knight, in the full effusion of his heart; “or d—n me, if I call him son more!—Why, Rashie, dost stand there like a log? *Sorry for it* is all a gentleman can say, if he happens to do any thing awry, especially over his claret.—I served in Hounslow, and should know something, I think, of affairs of honour. Let me hear no more of this, and we’ll go in a body and rummage out the badger in Birkenwood-bank.”

Rashleigh’s face resembled, as I have already noticed, no other countenance that I ever saw. But this singularity lay not only in the features, but in the mode of changing their expression. Other countenances, in altering from grief to joy, or from anger to satisfaction, pass through some brief interval, ere the expression of the predominant passion supersedes entirely that of its predecessor. There is a sort of twilight, like that between the clearing up of the darkness and the rising of

the sun, while the swollen muscles subside, the dark eye clears, the forehead relaxes and expands itself, and the whole countenance loses its sterner shades, and becomes serene and placid. Rashleigh's face exhibited none of these gradations, but changed almost instantaneously from the expression of one passion to that of the contrary. I can compare it to nothing but the sudden shifting of a scene in the theatre, where, at the whistle of the prompter, a cavern disappears, and a grove arises.

My attention was strongly arrested by this peculiarity on the present occasion. At Rashleigh's first entrance, "black he stood as night!" With the same inflexible countenance he heard my excuse and his father's exhortation; and it was not until Sir Hildebrand had done speaking, that the cloud cleared away at once, and he expressed, in the kindest and most civil terms, his perfect satisfaction with the very handsome apology I had offered.

"Indeed," he said, "I have so poor a brain myself, when I impose on it the least burthen beyond my usual three glasses, that I have only, like honest Cassio, a very vague recollection of the confusion of last night—remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly—a quarrel, but nothing wherefore—So, my dear cousin," he continued, shaking me kindly by the hand, "conceive how much I am relieved, by finding that I have to receive an apology, instead of having to make one.—I will not

have a word said upon the subject more ; I should be very foolish to institute any scrutiny into an account, when the balance, which I expected to be against me, has been so unexpectedly and agreeably struck in my favour. You see, Mr Osbaldistone, I am practising the language of Lombard Street, and qualifying myself for my new calling."

As I was about to answer, and raised my eyes for the purpose, they encountered those of Miss Vernon, who, having entered the room unobserved during the conversation, had given it her close attention. Abashed and confounded, I fixed my eyes on the ground, and made my escape to the breakfast-table, where I herded among my busy cousins.

My uncle, that the events of the preceding day might not pass out of our memory without a practical moral lesson, took occasion to give Rashleigh and me his serious advice to correct our milksop habits, as he termed them, and gradually to inure our brains to bear a gentlemanlike quantity of liquor, without brawls or breaking of heads. He recommended that we should begin piddling with a regular quart of claret per day, which, with the aid of March beer and brandy, made a handsome competence for a beginner in the art of toping. And for our encouragement, he assured us that he had known many a man who had lived to our years

without having drank a pint of wine at a sitting, who yet, by falling into honest company, and following hearty example, had afterwards been numbered among the best good fellows of the time, and could carry off their six bottles under their belt quietly and comfortably, without brawling or babbling, and be neither sick nor sorry the next morning.

Sage as this advice was, and comfortable as was the prospect it held out to me, I profited but little by the exhortation ; partly, perhaps, because, as often as I raised my eyes from the table, I observed Miss Vernon's looks fixed on me, in which I thought I could read grave compassion blended with regret and displeasure. I began to consider how I should seek a scene of explanation and apology with her also, when she gave me to understand she was determined to save me the trouble of soliciting an interview. "Cousin Francis," she said, addressing me by the same title she used to give to the other Osbaldistones, although I had, properly speaking, no title to be called her kinsman, "I have encountered this morning a difficult passage in the *Divina Comedia* of Dante, will you have the goodness to step to the library and give me your assistance ? and when you have unearthed for me the meaning of the obscure Florentine, we will join the rest at Birkenwood-bank, and see their luck at unearthing the badger."

I signified, of course, my readiness to wait upon her. Rashleigh made an offer to accompany us. "I am something better skilled," he said, "at tracking the sense of Dante through the metaphors and elisions of his wild and gloomy poem, than at hunting the poor inoffensive hermit yonder out of his cave."

"Pardon me, Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon : "but as you are to occupy Mr Francis's place in the counting-house, you must surrender to him the charge of your pupil's education at Osbaldistone Hall. We shall call you in, however, if there is any occasion, so pray do not look so grave upon it. Besides, it is a shame to you not to understand field-sports—What will you do should our uncle in Crane-Alley ask you the signs by which you track a badger?"

"Ay, true, Die,—true," said Sir Hildebrand with a sigh. "I misdoubt Rashleigh will be found short at the leap when he is put to the trial. An he would ha learned useful knowledge like his brothers, he was bred up where it grew, I wuss ; but French anties, and book-learning, with the new turnips, and the rats, and the Hanoverians, ha changed the world that I ha known in Old England—But come along with us, Rashie, and carry my hunting-staff, man ; thy cousin lacks none of thy company as now, and I wonna ha Die crossed—It's neer be said there was but one woman in

Osbaldistone Hall, and she died for lack of her will."

Rashleigh followed his father, as he commanded, not, however, ere he had whispered to Diana, "I suppose I must in discretion bring the courtier, Ceremony, in my company, and knock when I approach the door of the library?"

"No, no, Rashleigh," said Miss Vernon; "dismiss from your company the false archimage Disimulation, and it will better insure your free access to our classical consultations."

So saying, she led the way to the library, and I followed,—like a criminal I was going to say to execution; but, as I bethink me, I have used the simile once, if not twice before. Without any simile at all then, I followed, with a sense of awkward and conscious embarrassment, which I would have given a great deal to shake off. I thought it a degrading and unworthy feeling to attend one upon such an occasion, having breathed the air of the continent long enough to have imbibed the notion that lightness, gallantry, and something approaching to well-bred self-assurance, should distinguish the gentleman whom a fair lady selects for her companion in a *tête-à-tête*.

My English feelings, however, were too many for my French education, and I made, I believe, a very pitiful figure, when Miss Vernon, seating herself majestically in a huge elbow-chair in the li-

brary, like a judge about to hear a cause of importance, signed to me to take a chair opposite to her, (which I did, much like the poor fellow who is going to be tried,) and entered upon conversation in a tone of bitter irony.

CHAPTER XIII.

Dire was his thought, who first in poison steep'd
The weapon formed for slaughter—direr his,
And worthier of damnation, who instill'd
The mortal venom in the social cup,
To fill the veins with death instead of life.

Anonymous.

“UPON my word, Mr Francis Osbaldistone,” said Miss Vernon, with the air of one who thought herself fully entitled to assume the privilege of ironical reproach, which she was pleased to exert, “your character improves upon us, sir—I could not have thought that it was in you.—Yesterday might be considered as your assay-piece, to prove yourself entitled to be free of the corporation of Osbaldistone Hall. But it was a masterpiece.”

“I am quite sensible of my ill-breeding, Miss Vernon, and I can only say for myself, that I had received some communications by which my spirits were unusually agitated. I am conscious I was impertinent and absurd.”

“You do yourself great injustice,” said the merciless monitor—“you have contrived, by what I saw and have since heard, to exhibit in the course of one evening a happy display of all the various masterly qualifications which distinguish your several cousins ;—the gentle and generous temper of the benevolent Rashleigh,—the temperance of Percie,—the cool courage of Thorncliff,—John’s skill in dog-breaking,—Dickon’s aptitude to betting,—all exhibited by the single individual Mr Francis, and that with a selection of time, place, and circumstance, worthy the taste and sagacity of the sapient Wilfred.”

“Have a little mercy, Miss Vernon,” said I ; for I confess I thought the schooling as severe as the case merited, especially considering from what quarter it came, “and forgive me if I suggest, as an excuse for follies I am not usually guilty of, the custom of this house and country. I am far from approving it ; but we have Shakspeare’s authority for saying, that good wine is a good familiar creature, and that any man living may be overtaken at some time.”

“Ay, Mr Francis, but he places the panegyric and the apology in the mouth of the greatest villain his pencil has drawn. I will not, however, abuse the advantage your quotation has given me, by overwhelming you with the refutation with which the victim Cassio replies to the tempter Iago. I

only wish you to know, that there is one person at least sorry to see a youth of talents and expectations sink into the slough in which the inhabitants of this house are nightly wallowing."

"I have but wet my shoe, I assure you, Miss Vernon, and am too sensible of the filth of the puddle to step farther in."

"If such be your resolution," she replied, "it is a wise one. But I was so much vexed at what I heard, that your concerns have pressed before my own.—You behaved to me yesterday, during dinner, as if something had been told you which lessened or lowered me in your opinion—I beg leave to ask you what it was?"

I was stupified—the direct bluntness of the demand was much in the style one gentleman uses to another, when requesting explanation of any part of his conduct in a good-humoured yet determined manner, and was totally devoid of the circumlocutions, shadings, softenings, and periphrasis, which usually accompany explanations betwixt persons of different sexes in the higher orders of society.

I remained completely embarrassed; for it pressed on my recollection, that Rashleigh's communications, supposing them to be correct, ought to have rendered Miss Vernon rather an object of my compassion, than of my pettish resentment; and had they furnished the best apology possible for my own conduct, still I must have had the utmost dif-

ficulty in detailing what inferred such necessary and natural offence to Miss Vernon's feelings. She observed my hesitation, and proceeded in a tone somewhat more peremptory, but still temperate and civil.

"I hope Mr Osbaldistone does not dispute my title to request this explanation. I have no relative who can protect me ; it is, therefore, just that I be permitted to protect myself."

I endeavoured with hesitation to throw the blame of my rude behaviour upon indisposition—upon disagreeable letters from London. She suffered me to exhaust my apologies, and fairly to run myself aground, listening all the while with a smile of absolute incredulity.

"And now, Mr Francis, having gone through your prologue of excuses, with the same bad grace with which all prologues are delivered, please to draw the curtain, and show me that which I desire to see. In a word, let me know what Rashleigh says of me ; for he is the grand engineer and first mover of all the machinery of Osbaldistone Hall.

"But, supposing there was anything to tell, Miss Vernon, what does he deserve that betrays the secrets of one ally to another ?—Rashleigh, you yourself told me, remained your ally, though no longer your friend."

"I have neither patience for evasion, nor inclination for jesting, on the present subject. Rash-

leigh cannot—ought not—dare not, hold any language respecting me, Diana Vernon, but what I may demand to hear repeated. That there are subjects of secrecy and confidence between us, is most certain ; but to such, his communications to you could have no relation ; and with such, I, as an individual, have no concern.”

I had by this time recovered my presence of mind, and hastily determined to avoid making any disclosure of what Rashleigh had told me in a sort of confidence. There was something unworthy in retailing private conversation ; it could, I thought, do no good, and must necessarily give Miss Vernon great pain. I therefore replied, gravely, “ that nothing but frivolous talk had passed between Mr Rashleigh Osbaldistone and me on the state of the family at the Hall ; and I protested, that nothing had been said which left a serious impression to her disadvantage. As a gentleman, I said, I could not be more explicit in reporting private conversation.”

She started up with the animation of a Camilla about to advance into battle. “ This shall not serve your turn, sir—I must have another answer from you.” Her features kindled—her brow became flushed—her eye glanced wild-fire as she proceeded. “ I demand such an explanation, as a woman basely slandered has a right to demand from every man who calls himself a gentleman—as a

creature, motherless, friendless, alone in the world, left to her own guidance and protection, has a right to require from every being having a happier lot, in the name of that God who sent *them* into the world to enjoy, and *her* to suffer. You shall not deny me—or,” she added, looking solemnly upwards, “you will rue your denial, if there is justice for wrong either on earth or in Heaven.”

I was utterly astonished at her vehemence, but felt, thus conjured, that it became my duty to lay aside scrupulous delicacy, and gave her briefly, but distinctly, the heads of the information which Rashleigh had conveyed to me.

She sate down and resumed her composure, as soon as I entered upon the subject, and when I stopped to seek for the most delicate turn of expression, she repeatedly interrupted me, with “Go on—pray, go on; the first word which occurs to you is the plainest, and must be the best. Do not think of my feelings, but speak as you would to an unconcerned third party.”

Thus urged and encouraged, I stammered through all the account which Rashleigh had given of her early contract to marry an Osbaldistone, and of the uncertainty and difficulty of her choice; and there I would willingly have paused. But her penetration discovered that there was still something behind, and even guessed to what it related.

“ Well, it was ill-natured of Rashleigh to tell this tale on me. I am like the poor girl, in the Fairy Tale, who was betrothed in her cradle to the Black Bear of Norway, but complained chiefly of being called Bruin’s bride by her companions at school. But besides all this, Rashleigh said something of himself with relation to me—Did he not?”

“ He certainly hinted, that were it not for the idea of supplanting his brother, he would now, in consequence of his change of profession, be desirous that the word Rashleigh should fill up the blank in the dispensation, instead of the word Thorn-cliff.”

“ Ay? indeed?” she replied; “ was he so very condescending?—Too much honour for his humble hand-maid, Diana Vernon—And she, I suppose, was to be enraptured with joy could such a substitute be effected?”

“ To confess the truth, he intimated as much, and even farther insinuated”——

“ What?—Let me hear it all!” she exclaimed hastily.

“ That he had broken off your mutual intimacy, lest it should have given rise to an affection by which his destination to the church would not permit him to profit.”

“ I am obliged to him for his consideration,” replied Miss Vernon, every feature of her fine coun-

tenance taxed to express the most supreme degree of scorn and contempt. She paused a moment, and then said, with her usual composure, "There is but little I have heard from you which I did not expect to hear, and which I ought not to have expected; because, bating one circumstance, it is all very true. But as there are some poisons so active, that a few drops, it is said, will infect a whole fountain, so there is one falsehood in Rashleigh's communication, powerful enough to corrupt the whole well in which Truth herself is said to have dwelt. It is the leading and foul falsehood, that, knowing Rashleigh as I have reason too well to know him, any circumstance on earth could make me think of sharing my lot with him. No," she continued, with a sort of inward shuddering that seemed to express involuntary horror, "any lot rather than that—the sot, the gambler, the bully, the jockey, the insensate fool, were a thousand times preferable to Rashleigh;—the convent—the jail—the grave, shall be welcome before them all."

There was a sad and melancholy cadence in her voice, corresponding with the strange and interesting romance of her situation. So young, so beautiful, so untaught, so much abandoned to herself, and deprived of all the support which her sex derives from the countenance and protection of female friends, and even of that degree of defence

which arises from the forms with which the sex are approached in civilized life,—it is scarce metaphorical to say, that my heart bled for her. Yet there was an expression of dignity in her contempt of ceremony—of upright feeling in her disdain of falsehood—of firm resolution in the manner in which she contemplated the dangers by which she was surrounded, which blended my pity with the warmest admiration. She seemed a princess deserted by her subjects, and deprived of her power, yet still scorning those formal regulations of society which are created for persons of an inferior rank ; and, amid her difficulties, relying boldly and confidently on the justice of Heaven, and the unshaken constancy of her own mind.

I offered to express the mingled feelings of sympathy and admiration with which her unfortunate situation and her high spirit combined to impress me, but she imposed silence on me at once.

“ I told you in jest,” she said, “ that I disliked compliments—I now tell you in earnest, that I do not ask sympathy, and that I despise consolation. What I have borne I have borne—What I am to bear, I will sustain as I may ; no word of commiseration can make a burthen feel one feather’s weight lighter to the slave who must carry it. There is only one human being who could have assisted me, and that is he who has rather chosen to

add to my embarrassment—Rashleigh Osbaldistone.—Yes! the time once was that I might have learned to love that man—But, great God! the purpose for which he insinuated himself into the confidence of one already so forlorn—the undeviating and continued assiduity with which he pursued that purpose from year to year, without one single momentary pause of remorse or compassion—the purpose for which he would have converted into poison the food he administered to my mind—Gracious Providence! what should I have been in this world and the next, in body and soul, had I fallen under the arts of this accomplished villain!”

I was so much struck with the scene of perfidious treachery which these words disclosed, that I rose from my chair, hardly knowing what I did, laid my hand on the hilt of my sword, and was about to leave the apartment in search of him on whom I might discharge my just indignation. Almost breathless, and with eyes and looks in which scorn and indignation had given way to the most lively alarm, Miss Vernon threw herself between me and the door of the apartment.

“Stay,” she said,—“stay; however just your resentment, you do not know half the secrets of this fearful prison-house.” She then glanced her eyes anxiously round the room, and sunk her voice almost to a whisper—“He bears a charmed life; you cannot assail him without endangering other

lives, and wider destruction. Had it been otherwise, in some hour of justice he had hardly been safe even from this weak hand. I told you," she said, motioning me back to my seat, "that I needed no comforter—I now tell you, I need no avenger."

I resumed my seat, mechanically musing on what she said, and recollecting also what had escaped me in my first glow of resentment, that I had no title whatever to constitute myself Miss Vernon's champion. She paused to let her own emotions and mine subside, and then addressed me with more composure.

"I have already said, that there is a mystery connected with Rashleigh, of a dangerous and fatal nature. Villain as he is, and as he knows he stands convicted in my eyes, I cannot—dare not, openly break with or defy him. You also, Mr Osbaldistone, must bear with him with patience, foil his artifices by opposing to them prudence, not violence, and, above all, you must avoid such scenes as that of last night, which cannot but give him perilous advantages over you. This caution I designed to give you, and it was the object with which I desired this interview; but I have extended my confidence farther than I proposed."

I assured her it was not misplaced.

"I do not believe that it is," she replied. "You have that in your face and manners which autho-

rizes trust. Let us continue to be friends. You need not fear," she said, laughing, while she blushed a little, yet speaking with a free and unembarrassed voice, "that friendship with us should prove only a specious name, as the poet says, for another feeling. I belong, in habits of thinking and acting, rather to your sex, with which I have always been brought up, than to my own. Besides, the fatal veil was wrapt round me in my cradle ; for you may easily believe I have never thought of the detestable condition under which I may remove it. The time," she added, "for expressing my final determination is not arrived, and I would fain have the freedom of wild heath and open air with the other commoners of nature, as long as I can be permitted to enjoy them. And now that the passage in Dante is made so clear, pray go and see what is become of the badger-baiters—My head aches so much that I cannot join the party."

I left the library, but not to join the hunters. I felt that a solitary walk was necessary to compose my spirits, before I again trusted myself in Rashleigh's company, whose depth of calculating villainy had been so strikingly exposed to me. In Dubourg's family, (as he was of the reformed persuasion,) I had heard many a tale of Romish priests, who gratified, at the expence of friendship, hospitality, and the most sacred ties of social life, those passions, the blameless indulgence of which is de-

nied by the rules of their order. But the deliberate system of undertaking the education of a deserted orphan of noble birth, and so intimately allied to his own family, with the perfidious purpose of ultimately seducing her, detailed as it was by the intended vietim with all the glow of virtuous resentment, seemed more atrocious to me than the worst of the tales I had heard at Bourdeaux, and I felt it would be extremely difficult for me to meet Rashleigh, and yet to suppress the abhorrence with which he impressed me. Yet this was absolutely necessary, not only on account of the mysterious charge which Diana had given me, but because I had, in reality, no ostensible ground for quarrelling with him.

I therefore resolved, as far as possible, to meet Rashleigh's dissimulation with equal caution on my part during our residence in the same family; and when he should depart for London, I resolved to give Owen at least such a hint of his character as might keep him on his guard over my father's interests. Avarice or ambition, I thought, might have as great, or greater charms, for a mind constituted like Rashleigh's, than unlawful pleasure; the energy of his character, and his power of assuming all seeming good qualities, were likely to procure him a high degree of confidence, and it was not to be hoped, that either good faith or gratitude would prevent him from abusing it. The task was some-

what difficult, especially in my circumstances, since the caution which I threw out might be imputed to jealousy of my rival, or rather my successor, in my father's favour. Yet I thought it absolutely necessary to frame such a letter, leaving it to Owen, who, in his own line, was wary, prudent, and circumspect, to make the necessary use of his knowledge of Rashleigh's true character. Such a letter, therefore, I indited, and dispatched to the post-house by the first opportunity.

At my meeting with Rashleigh, he, as well as I, appeared to have taken up distant ground, and to be disposed to avoid all pretext for collision. He was probably conscious that Miss Vernon's communications had been unfavourable to him, though he could not know that they extended to discovering his meditated villainy towards her. Our intercourse, therefore, was reserved on both sides, and turned on subjects of little interest. Indeed, his stay at Osbaldistone Hall did not exceed a few days after this period, during which I only remarked two circumstances respecting him. The first was, the rapid and almost intuitive manner in which his powerful and active mind seized upon and arranged the elementary principles necessary in his new profession, which he now studied hard, and occasionally made parade of his progress, as if to shew me how light it was for him to lift the burthen which I had flung down from very wear-

ness and inability to carry it. The other remarkable circumstance was, that, notwithstanding the injuries with which Miss Vernon charged Rashleigh, they had several private interviews together of considerable length, although their bearing towards each other in public did not seem more cordial than usual.

When the day of Rashleigh's departure arrived, his father bade him farewell with indifference ; his brothers, with the ill-concealed glee of school-boys, who see their taskmaster depart for a season, and feel a joy which they dare not express ; and I myself with cold politeness. When he approached Miss Vernon, and would have saluted her, she drew back with a look of haughty disdain ; but said, as she extended her hand to him, " Farewell, Rashleigh ; God reward you for the good you have done, and forgive you for the evil you have meditated."

" Amen, my fair cousin," he replied, with an air of sanctity, which belonged, I thought, to the seminary of Saint Omers ; " happy is he whose good intentions have borne fruit in deeds, and whose evil thoughts have perished in the blossom."

These were his parting words. " Accomplished hypocrite !" said Miss Vernon to me, as the door closed behind him—" how nearly can what we most despise and hate approach in outward manner to that which we most venerate !"

I had written to my father by Rashleigh, and also a few lines to Owen, besides the confidential letter which I have already mentioned, and which I thought it more proper and prudent to dispatch by another conveyance. In these epistles, it would have been natural for me to have pointed out to my father and my friend, that I was at present in a situation where I could improve myself in no respect, unless in the mysteries of hunting and hawking ; and where I was not unlikely to forget, in the company of rude grooms and horse-boys, any useful knowledge or elegant accomplishments which I had hitherto acquired. It would also have been natural that I should have expressed the disgust and tædium which I was likely to feel among beings, whose whole souls were centered in field-sports or more degrading pastimes—that I should have complained of the habitual intemperance of the family in which I was a guest, and the difficulty and almost resentment with which my uncle Sir Hildebrand received any apology for deserting the bottle. This last, indeed, was a topic on which my father, himself a man of severe temperance, was likely to be easily alarmed, and to have touched upon this spring would to a certainty have opened the doors of my prison-house, and would either have been the means of abridging my exile, or at least would have procured me a change of residence during my rustication.

I say, my dear Tresham, that, considering how very unpleasant a prolonged residence at Osbaldistone Hall must have been to a young man of my age, and with my habits, it might have seemed very natural that I should have pointed out all these disadvantages to my father, in order to obtain his consent for leaving my uncle's mansion. Nothing, however, is more certain, than that I did not say a single word to this purpose in my letters to my father and Owen. If Osbaldistone Hall had been Athens in all its pristine glory of learning, and inhabited by sages, heroes, and poets, I could not have expressed less inclination to leave it.

If thou hast any of the salt of youth left in thee, Tresham, thou wilt be at no loss to account for my silence on a topic seemingly so obvious. Miss Vernon's extreme beauty, of which she herself seemed so little conscious,—her romantic and mysterious situation,—the evils to which she was exposed,—the courage with which she seemed to face them,—her manners, more frank than belonged to her sex, yet, as it seemed to me, exceeding in frankness only from the dauntless consciousness of her innocence,—above all, the obvious and flattering distinction which she made in my favour over all other persons, were at once calculated to interest my best feelings, to excite my curiosity, awaken my imagination, and gratify my vanity. I dared not indeed confess to myself the depth of the inte-

rest with which Miss Vernon inspired me, or the large share which she occupied in my thoughts. We read together, walked together, rode together, and sate together. The studies which she had broken off upon her quarrel with Rashleigh, she now resumed under the auspices of a tutor, whose views were more sincere, though his capacity was far more limited.

In truth, I was by no means qualified to assist her in the prosecution of several profound studies which she had commenced with Rashleigh, and which appeared to me more fitted for a churchman than for a beautiful female. Neither can I conceive with what view he should have engaged Diana in the gloomy maze of casuistry which schoolmen called philosophy, or in the equally abstruse, though more certain sciences of mathematics and astronomy ; unless it were to break down and confound in her mind the difference and distinction between the sexes, and to habituate her to trains of subtile reasoning, by which he might at his own time invest that which was wrong with the colour of that which is right. It was in the same spirit, though in the latter case the evil purpose was more obvious, that the lessons of Rashleigh had encouraged Miss Vernon in setting at nought and despising the forms and ceremonial limits which are drawn round females in modern society. It is true, she was sequestered from all

female company, and could not learn the usual rules of decorum, either from example or precept ; yet such was her innate modesty, and accurate sense of what was right and wrong, that she would not of herself have adopted the bold uncompromising manner which struck me with so much surprise on our first acquaintance, had she not been led to conceive, that a contempt of ceremony indicated at once superiority of understanding, and the confidence of conscience in innocence. Her wily instructor had, no doubt, his own views in levelling those outworks which reserve and caution erect around virtue. But for these, and for his other crimes, he has long since answered at a higher tribunal.

Besides the progress which Miss Vernon, whose powerful mind readily adopted every means of information offered to it, had made in more abstract science, I found her no contemptible linguist, and well acquainted both with ancient and modern literature. Were it not that strong talents will often go farthest when they seem to have least assistance, it would be almost incredible to tell the rapidity of Miss Vernon's progress in knowledge ; and it was still more extraordinary, when her stock of mental acquisitions from books was compared with her total ignorance of actual life. It seemed as if she saw and knew every thing, except what passed in the world around her ; and I believe it

was this very ignorance and simplicity of thinking upon ordinary subjects, so strikingly contrasted with her fund of general knowledge and information, which rendered her conversation so irresistibly fascinating, and rivetted the attention to whatever she said or did ; since it was absolutely impossible to anticipate whether her next word or action was to display the most acute perception, or the most profound simplicity. The degree of danger which necessarily attended a ~~year~~^{year} of my age and keen feelings from remaining in close and constant intimacy with an object so amiable, and so peculiarly interesting, all who remember their own sentiments at my age may easily estimate.

END OF VOLUME FIFTH.

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